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JUDAISM

AND

THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

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SOME CHAPTERS

ON

JUDAISM

AND

THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

BY

RABBI LOUIS GROSSMANN, D.D.

Religions
Title
11435

NEW YORK AND LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
The Knickerbocker Press
1889

Duke Univ.
4/9/31

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PREFACE.

RELIGION is the truth that absorbs all other truths. It is the highest synthesis, the science of all sciences. All attainments are subservient to the purposes of progressing culture. The aggregate experiences of mankind are on the line of the universal end to emancipate the soul.

In this sense all the activities of humanity in their vast variety and multiform energies are in the employ of religion. For religion is the name of the final and much desired state, when man will be sovereign of himself, as far as he can, and master of the tools of his life.

I have attempted in the following pages to sketch a few agreements which are already noticeable between historical Judaism and the present science of religion. I mean to do a humble task, conscious of the magnitude of the problem. I am content with suggesting merely the thought, that the science of religion is the science of Judaism.

I find it is time to say something with respect to the science of religion from the Jewish standpoint. For though Max Müller, Amberly, Albert Kuhn, Otto Pfleiderer, Tylor,

Lubbock, and Réville have done monumental work, and are the worthy protagonists of a thought which already has gathered to itself many illustrious devotees, Jewish teachers have been silent concerning it, and I thought that something ought to be said by a Jew concerning this most promising and noblest work of our age. In fact, I cannot hesitate admitting that I think I see a profound revelation in this new science—a revelation such as shall corroborate and illustrate most notably the doctrines of Judaism. It will find the keynote to bring the dissonant chords of sectarian religions into harmony. It will unfold the true character of religion, and teach the sublimity of God by pointing out anew and in the loftiest instance how sublime His work is. It is my fervent belief that the results of the science of religion and the doctrines of Judaism overlap each other, and so I have treated them in these chapters.

In this spirit I have essayed touching on some points common to this science of religion and to Judaism. I shall be content if I have succeeded at least in recommending the subject of these chapters to the earnest thought of the reader and to men of greater learning and of more efficient skill.

L. GROSSMANN.

DETROIT, October, 1888.

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JUDAISM
AND THE
SCIENCE OF RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

THE INTUITIVE CHARACTER OF RELIGION.

To trace the history of religion to its first epoch is more than merely matter-of-fact historical work. At least, so we are continually told. And to analyze the mass of religious teachings, as we have received them, and to discriminate between principles and precepts, an incisive master is needed, who can discern the constituent elements, and teach them discreetly and with more reverence, because of his superior knowledge. But when we consider that each one of us, however humble his attainments are, is held accountable for the quality of his religion, for as our principles, so our life, and that again determines the worth, or worthlessness, of our career, such an investigation becomes a matter of consideration for us. And when we add to this, that it accords with our native dignity, and that it is the ambition of our manhood, to grow as wise as we can with regard to reli-

gious knowledge; and also, that we have respect, more than for perfunctory acts of ours, for such acts of ours in which lies evidence of self-origination and self-conscious purpose, this study of nature and of the contents of religion, and of faith and piety, becomes serious.

To each one of us, then, such an investigation is profitable. The results of it can but conduce to clearing up much which now is mysterious, and to making us respectful toward the phenomena of nature, the significance of which we cannot make out. It will also reconcile us to certain aberrations of our fellow-men, with that sort of forbearance and sympathy, with which, being conscious of occasional errors and constitutional foibles on our part, we wish ourselves to be received.

The study of the science of religion makes us both tolerant and hopeful.[1] As soon as we have, by a desire to know, come to look upon religion as a sacred matter, in which all human beings have a profound interest, and upon the ways in which people believe to worship the supreme being, as co-ordinate

[1] "The nations are the introduction and preparation for the expected Messianic time."—Jehuda Halevi, "Kusari," IV., 23.

"The teachings of the Nazarene, and also those of the Arabian after him, are proper to pave the way for the Messiah, and subserve the purpose of the eventual serving of the Lord distinctively by all mankind."—Maimonides, "Hilchoth Melochim," XI., 11.

data in a large aggregate,[1] our own individual mode of contemplation, which we have of the things, of the affairs, of the events, and of their significance in this world, sinks down into a level with the rest. We realize that, at best, we are nothing exceptional, but follow a rule of human action, a law of mind, a divine intuition, by which all men feel out, as we do, the spirit, according to the capacities of which each one is possessed.

When we go into that large region, where moves the soul of man, let us remember that we have not to deal with vagaries, but with thoughts and actions, the certainty and the regularity of which may surprise us. We shall see them appear in all places where the mind of man was busy devising means of sustenance, and even where, without care, savage man was satisfied to be at the mercy of the earth. The unsophisticated child of nature may lack the words for confidence and for hope.[2] We shall see, however, in a state of

[1] Remembering that the word Thora has a factitive sense, with the intimation that the "pointing" out the way, the directing, teaching, has a progression, the passage in "Pesachim," 68, b, is suggestive of the thought, that the virtue of a doctrine is its promise of a greater illumination: "If it were not for the doctrine (Thora), heaven and earth would not be maintained."

[2] When the Talmud says: "The aboriginal man (Adam Ha-rishon) was a 'Min,' *i. e.* a dissenter,"—(Sanhedrin, 38, b), it means that the child of nature had no servility in his temperament, and believed himself to be master.

primitive culture and in the aboriginal condition, the demands of intuition plainly declared; and, as we know there is a religion of civilization, we shall come to recognize religious elements in the life of the wild man.[1]

[1] Dr. David Kaufmann maintains: "The fact deserves being mentioned, that the Jewish philosophers of religion do not advert to the proof for the existence of God on the ground of the *consensus gentium*, and because the concept of God resides in every human being, either by intuition or by a primeval inward revelation."—"Geschichte der Attributenlehre," Gotha, 1877, p. 2, note 4. See, however, the remarks of Dr. Wise, in his "Judaism and Christianity: Their Agreements and Disagreements," Cincinnati, 1883, p. 11.: "*Vox populi vox dei* is in Hebrew, *Kol hammon ke-kol shaddai*, and Cicero's argument based on the common consent of all nations, (*argumentum a consensu gentium*) must not be taken too lightly . . . for all men know more than one man; and when we speak of human reason we mean the reason of humanity, or at least of that portion thereof which is capable of reasoning."

Even Nachmanides, in "Sechuth Adam Horishan," speaks of a *Sebara hoenushith Hayeshara*, a healthful rationale of the human mind. See Jellinek ed. "Derasha des Nachmanides," Leipzig, 1853.

See also Salomo ibn Gabirol, "Mibchar Hap'ninim" (in Löwinsohn's German translation, Berlin, 1842, p. 12). Here Gabirol speaks deprecatingly of philosophy. They (the philosophers) are not aware, he says, that their disputes are settled already before their disputations, by the *Haskomo*—common consent. See Geiger's "Salomo ibn Gabirol," Leipzig, 1867, p. 87, and note 97. Abraham ibn Ezra says: "The laws which are fundamental, exclusive of time, place, and relation, are native inclinations, intuitive qualities, treasures, as it were, put into our hands for safe-keeping. . . . These

Nay, we discover a wealth of religious ideas where we supposed there was nothing but animal living, barren of all mentality. When our æstheticism and our finer feelings shall abhor barbarous practices, our study leads us to recognize that, even in this forlorn condition, the native instinct has come to the surface, and we may find some kind of extenuation for them.

We deplore that a shockingly low degree of humaneness led the Hindoo widow to immolate herself on the pyre of her husband, or the Fiji to drag his mother, strangling her at the grave prepared for her; but psychology will reconcile us to these practices, and by introspection into their soul-life we shall know that, at least, they are bona fide efforts of religious exaltation, which are analogous to that high-strained piety through which the Buddhist resigns himself to a life of ascetic beatitude, and which still produces hermits, our monks and nuns, and those cases we read of in our criminal news of the frightful extravagances of fanatics.

modes of our being, men were conscious of previous to the delivery of the Law through Moses, and there are many of them. The ten commandments are such, except the Sabbath. Moses merely taught them again."—"Yessod Mora," Sha'ar V., 1. Jellinek mentions a kabbalistic work on Intuition, by Chamai Gaon, "Auswahl Kabbalistischer Mystik," I. Heft, Leipzig, 1853, p. 8.

There is one thing in which we must be clear. It is apparently a truism. There is not a religious system in the world which does not allege teaching the doctrine, and I am bold to say there is not one of them that, at some time or other, does not forget it. It is: All men have religion. I know that as soon as I state this I incur tacitly blame on all sides. There is an everlasting impugnment of the charges of heresy. All the sects stand over against each other with this cannon of heresy loaded against all respective outsiders. So that, as a matter of course, all are in the fire, all heretics. Every phase of religious thought is against every other phase. There is a continuous assertion of the dogma: I am right, all the rest of you are wrong. I am saved, all of you are damned. Some, led by sympathy, felt and said that, perhaps, behind the errors, as which they were proclaimed, there might be some truth. They declared that the all-assertive power of the good is such, that in all the guesses of the mass of human beings, there lies an element, which it is fair to admit as somewhat promising. But the power of Church and of sects was quick to silence these, not from a suspicion only of danger from them to their own safety, but in accordance with the nature of sectarianism.

But this very righteous indignation at the

heterodox, and the loyal guarding of the chosen doctrine, is perhaps as good a testimony as one wants to advert to the fact, which those who should know, are bent on stifling, and those who do know, are brought to grief for. Every man forms his own religious conception, and within the precincts of each religion, who can guarantee that the co-devotees to his faith have the identical conceptions of it?[1] Is not every one aware that, owing to individuality, which defies all rules, latitude must be tolerated. The organism of church discipline must relent for its own good sake, and forbear interfering with the interpretations, which are as various as the multitudinous refractions of the ray of light, coming down from the great central fire in the sky, and breaking up into a thousand colors. The discreet leaders of religious movements appreciated this. Such, however, as with more enthusiasm than wisdom, like Calvin, attempted to invade the precincts of individuality, and

[1] If we look still more minutely, we see that no two men are exactly alike in character, circumstances, and development, and therefore that no two men can exhibit their religion in just the same way, though they kneel at the same altar and pronounce the same creed. From the difference between men, it follows that there must be as many different subjective conceptions of God, and forms of religion, as there are men and women who think about God and apply their thoughts and feelings to life.—Theodore Parker, "Discourse of Matters of Religion," London, 1877, p. 27.

employed the irrational method of insisting upon a pattern of religious conception, as the workman uses his pattern to turn out work, came to nought.

Even in the very beginning of history, when the affairs of the individual merge into the communal interests, there is an unmistakable evidence that the motive force of the life of every member of the tribe has a centre, a spot, which no amount of compulsion and no degree of terror can touch. The cause of sustenance, of self, and the most elusive and still no less positive element of inward direction, induce and regulate his actions, and these yield nowhere, and at no point are they to be bent. In fact, throughout the history of mankind, there has been nothing which has been held to with more obstinacy, and, I might even say, with more heroism, than this very self-assertion and the power of individuality; in barbarian times and in epochs of regeneration, in periods of intellectual decay, perhaps not much less than in times in which the geniuses of mankind lit up the world with new light. This is the great gift of the deity to which every man clings, whether he knows it to be a divine thing or not; for by it he is himself, by it he contrasts himself with others, and comes to see himself. By it he has a standard to check himself off, as it were, as one amongst his fel-

low-men, nay even gauge himself with a more ambitious standard.[1] In individuality, and in the progression of the fainter and gradually strengthening power of self, lies the track for the march of religion. Individuality is the source, and individuality is also the end of religion. From a glimmering self-consciousness, in which acts are part and parcel of Ego, there is an evolutionary process into a condition of manliness, in which every thought and feeling and act are determined and bear the stamp we are pleased to put upon them, are ours, as God can call all creation his, being the beneficent and munificent in one.[2]

This individuality at all periods must stand for the best expression we have of religion; and if we have any respect for the false religions, it is because there was in them this element of individuality, at a time when to

[1] "This passing beyond the empirical world implies in itself a gauging of the things at hand, a contrasting them with the eternal."—Dr. H. Steinthal, "Mythos und Religion," Berlin, 1870, p. 20, in Virchow und Holtzendorf's "Sammlung gemeinverständlicher Vorträge," No. 97.

[2] "My son, know thy soul, and thou shalt know thy creator!"—Albo, "Ikkarim," III., 6. So also says Gazzali ("Mos'ne Zedek," ed.. Goldenthal, Leipzig, 1839, p. 28): "One of the wise men said: 'Know thy soul, and thou shalt know thy God.'"

Isaac Arama in "Akedath Jitzchok," Shaar 68, exclaims: "I am much surprised to find that he, who does not even know of his soul, desires to perceive God!"

have had a correct and faultless religion would have been nothing short of a miracle. We are willing to admit that in so far as honest efforts were made with limited capacities and meagre tools of intellect, it behooves us to have respect even for the false concoctions they called their religion, because we are sure that that which set their intellects at work, the spirit, which produced all this mental activity, which backed its ambitious undertaking, was akin to the noblest mind that ever earned the admiration and the lasting gratitude of mankind.[1]

[1] Let me call attention to a passage in Rénan's new work, "The History of the People of Israel," Boston, 1888 (English translation), p. 3: "We must assume primitive humanity to have been very malevolent. The chief characteristics of man for many centuries were craft, a refinement for cunning, and a degree of lubricity, which, like that of the monkey, knew neither times nor seasons. But amid this mass of shameless satyrs there were some groups, which had the germs of better things in them. Love was in the course of time accompanied by reverie. Slowly but surely a principle of authority was established. The need for order created the hierarchy. Force was met by imposture and by working upon the superstitious fear of men; sacerdotal offices were founded. Certain men persuaded others that they were the necessary intermediaries between them and the divinity."

This is an account of the original history of religion, which must be designated as truly Mandevilian. Notice that even Mandeville did not posit a more aggravated baseness as the source of religious practices. Mandeville holds that virtue sprang in the first instance from the cunning of rulers. They acted upon the feeling of vanity. Similarly

We analyze the mind of the primitive man. We try to get behind the scenes of his mental life; to discover the motives which, because of their peculiar character, we never fail to recognize as aboriginal. This is an instance in which primitive studies, apart from their intrinsic interest, become instructive and disciplinary. What gives to this first period in the history of religion the characteristic which is inalienable, and which perhaps no later period possesses, as this one does? It is that here we have a time in which every thing is direct. Every one himself communicated with God, with nature, with spirit. The questions are direct, the answers gathered direct. There is a reaching out on the part of every inquiring individual to satisfy a conscious, an emotional, a peremptory question. Go through the his-

Rénan speaks of original "lubricity" and subsequent priestly imposition. In his "Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue" Mandeville says: "Observing that none were either so savage as not to be charmed with praise, or so despicable as patiently to bear contempt, they justly concluded that flattery must be the most powerful argument that could be used to human creatures. Making use of this bewitching engine, they extolled the excellency of our nature above other animals. . . . by the help of which we were capable of performing the most noble achievements. Having, by this artful flattery insinuated themselves into the hearts of men, they began to instruct them in the notions of honor and shame, etc." —Quoted in Lecky's "History of European Morals," New York, 1882, Vol. I., p. 6.

tory of the Church and through many other phases of religious history, can you take out of the mass of believers one, who went to the bosom of nature in such a childlike way? Then there were herds that were driven in mass by the dictatorial teaching of the leader. Did any one dare to hide apart, going out in the yearning of his burning soul, to drink from the universal spring—he was a heretic. Man in the pure state of naturalness could do what the man of a civilized age cannot. Individuality must have free scope; it is imperative; it is regal. There can be no gainsaying.

And now there has been a happy reversion. Providence has at last freed individualism from its unnatural prison; there is much promise. Now let prophets arise! They have a glorious theme. Man has been emancipated, and the proclamation of freedom has been heard; it has penetrated everywhere. There is no nook in the civilized world, but what some one has heard the appeal that has been sent out broadcast. The dry bones are beginning to move. There is a regeneration; but this time not by priest, not by holy water or baresma. Do not look for an intricate composite, for an ingenious contrivance, by which all religions and all sects can be adapted to one gauge? There is no compromise, because it is the most simple; in fact, up to our time there could have been

no such simple faith, because these times were not simple. It is the most peaceful solution of the perplexing matter. It is no antagonism; because the universal faith comes spontaneously out of the heart of man. Let me lay it down here without question, and in a plain way, that the coming faith does not antagonize. It does not ingratiate itself into the good graces of any sect, and cares not for the immediate benefit of dissemination. It has no opposition to any faith. It states candidly the claims that a man, by the fact of his manhood has an inalienable possession.[1] It guards these. It stands for individuality, which is the solid content of all religiousness, and it goes out to preach the gospel of individuality, as the scientist undertakes to gain converts to the belief in the unerring laws of nature. Science takes out of the mass of human studies the department of religion, and makes that the paramouut object of thought. He, who wants to know it and make it his own, must come and attend.

Does any one say this is sacrilegious? He who thinks it is sacrilegious to analyze, to study religion and religious phenomena, goes farther than we dare ever go.[2] The pearl that sparkles

[1] "The act of converting a man is like having created him." —"Bereshith Rabba," 84.

[2] Rabbenu Nissim declares. "There is no doubt of it that it is proper that the things appertaining to natural phenomena and their explanation should not be mysterious, but be understood and popularized."—"Derashoth" of R. Nissim, I., 5, 2.

on the sands of the ocean is no gift of God as long as it lies there. The religion which God has implanted in us is to be mined, as gold is mined out of the bowels of the earth. The faith that is found on the surface is not the faith we want. We want it dug up, carefully cleansed of all alloy, and then beaten with blows from the hammer of our character, into a thing of beauty and of use. Did God give us any thing on earth, that putting our hands lazily into our lap, we shall be the consumers? Am I not at least to put the acid on it to test its degree of fineness? The times of receptivity, with enforced absence of self-assertion are—God be thanked!—passed; and—God be thanked!—the time has come when we can go to work earnestly and manfully in the serious endeavor of self-enlightenment and self-improvement, to find for ourselves what is religion; how it came; what was its first form; what is its history; how did mankind progress in the school of religious teachings. What is religion in itself? Taking away the heap of accretion which has gathered upon the venerable faiths of antiquity, what is left? And having obtained the residual quantity, what is worthy the name divine intuition, and destined to become in fact the universal faith?

In the light of these considerations, by which we grow more strongly convinced of

the fundamental unity of the human race, every man being found to be endowed by nature with an aptitude, with which he fashions for himself the furniture of his mind and fits up his spiritual home, we have yet one matter to attend to. Strange to say, it is to vindicate a truth against the author of it. It is interesting to notice an assertion made by Max Müller, and before stating it I bear witness gratefully to the "epoch-making" services of that profound scholar, who has given the first impulse to the liberal and liberalizing study of religions, and to whom is due the growing habit of toleration and communion between the faiths. He says, and it could scarcely be expressed more concisely, that there were different modes of aspects among the races, and makes ethnical distinctions in matters of religion. "The worship of the Aryan race, characterized by one word, is a worship of God in nature, appearing behind the gorgeous veil of nature, rather than as hidden behind the veil of the sanctuary of the human heart."[1] And "The worship of all the Semitic nations, characterized by one word, was preëminently God in History, of God as affecting the destinies of individuals, and races, and nations, rather than of God as wielding the

[1] Max Müller, "Science of Religion," New York, 1870, pp. 62, 63.

powers of nature."[1] But it is not evident in what connection these two precise characterizations stand with the third quotation, which I allow myself to transcribe: "The names of the Semitic deities are mostly words expressive of moral qualities; they mean the Strong, the Exalted, the Lord, the King; and they grow but seldom into divine personalities, definite in their outward appearance, or easily to be recognized by strongly marked features of a real dramatic character. Hence many of the ancient Semitic gods have a tendency to flow together, and a transition from the worship of many gods to the worship of one god required no great effort. In the monotonous desert, more particularly, the worship of single gods glided away almost imperceptibly into the worship of one God."[2]

If it is said, on the one side, the data in the formation of the idea of God are gathered from nature, and on the other from history,

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 63. Let me refer here to page 19, where the dramatic aspect will be found to be not an insignificant factor in matters of religion. The moral conduct of man is conventional and utilitarian, except for the display of man's unquestioning submissiveness to the stringent supremeness of Providence. The presentiment is prominent in Judaism that personal fate is coördinate with communal destiny and subordinate to the unfailing and persistent assertion of the universal end.

the distinction is ingenious with respect to the ethnological aspect in later stages of religion among the two races respectively. It seems, however, that we do not misapprehend Max Müller's method, in which he was incontestably the protagonist, that in dealing with the connotation of names of gods and with the modes of worship, he searches for essentials of human nature, and that he is inclined to estimate the modifying influences of circumstance, and race, and history, as merely incidental. The premise is that natural disposition is alike in all human beings, the considerations of ethnology are after-considerations.

I shall not contend here that to determine the fundamentals of a religious conception something more is needed than observation of worship; though that is no small aid to the religious scientist. But, admitting that the kind of religious practices may be hints of the drift of religious thought, the thought, at any rate, is earlier, and has its own history, which supervenes that of ritual and worship. In fact, worship is an institution, while religion is not. This is original. To distinguish, therefore, between Aryan and Semitic religions is legitimate only when we keep in mind that we are treating of later phases, not of the original state of them, which was identical in all, as human nature is identical in all men, with-

out regard to their race, or nationality, or place of living singly.[1]

In addition to this, the explanation which Max Müller offers needs to be investigated, in the first place, of the transition of the henotheism of the Semitic peoples, and of the merging of the separate gods into one generic God, and in the second place, of the moral character of each of these former ones, and of their potency because of their dramatic character. For it looks just to say that the gods of the Phœnicians, Babylonians, and Jews, were, in the main moral conceptions, and in this sense the analysis is happy. But with respect to the contrast drawn between Semitic views of a predominating moral norm in destiny and Aryan materialistic fatalism, it will be noted that no finality has been stated. It must be remembered that in fixing a relation between

[1] "The distinction is not to be sought in the difference of the objective aspect of a nature, but solely in the practical interest of every tribe to suppose that the divine being is specially and exclusively connected with it. Only in this practical sense of a special God of the separate tribes can we speak of the 'mono-theistic instinct of the Semites.' But not in the theoretic sense of a recognition of one universal world deity. In fact, the Semites were originally farther removed from the theoretic conception of a divine unity, which is inseparably connected with its universality, than the Indo-Europeans, for of a mono-theistic, speculative idea of God we find, among these latter, nowhere any trace."—Otto Pfleiderer, "Religionsphilosophie," Berlin, 1884, Vol. II., p. 120.

himself and his God, man transcends purely moral and natural phenomena. The impressions gathered from the play of fate, *i. e.* of moral and of natural law, coalesce. Weak and transient man feels himself incommensurate with the power, and helpless in the régime, of both fate and nature. It is clear that by régime of nature is meant the execution of laws in the world of matter, the experiences man has come to value at the expense of personal cost. So also it is plain what is meant by the power of fate. The overwhelming demonstration of "a power not ourselves" that conditions and rules us, and of which, after a lapse of prolonged observation and experiences, we form a conviction that it is just and "making for righteousness."

Now, to hold these two experiences apart is making a distinction which an inward feeling, hard to define, tells us does not obtain; but, on the contrary, this intuition suggests the presence of one grand intelligence. It is not nature by itself, or fate as exemplified in history by itself, that brings home the thought of God, but that which they both jointly suggest. It is the dramatic which I mean. There is a dramatic expression in the peal of thunder, of which the frail being is keen to be cognizant, for he knows that the elements have their own sovereign way. Often enough the thunder has

rolled threateningly above him, and he has seen the brows of heaven knit, and that sinister foreboding he knew. He saw the spirit of heaven wrap himself in the dark clouds, and the kind light disappear. All prayers and sacrifices were then in vain. It is the mise-en-scène of the superior law, in the presence of which the reed-like hand of man can avail nothing. It was a spectacle of force, but not malevolent. Somehow, we reproach ourselves, mentally, for our lack of trust. And so also in the moral world the dramatic presentation of Providence is perceptible every hour and in every place. We have not yet learned to divorce will of God from laws of Providence. They are substantially one. It is useless, under all circumstances unwise, and it implies skepticism, hurrying to get out from beneath the hand of Providence.

Mark what Réville says[1]: "What is a tragedy? It is the exhibition by the setting forth of an event, or of a situation, or of a human destiny, of a superior order of things, overwhelming in its irresistible course our petty calculations, our limited previsions, our vulgar wisdom, advancing imperturbably towards its goal without concerning itself with these spiders' webs, and attaining its ends with

[1] "Prolegomena to the History of Religions," Translated by A. S. Squire. London, 1884, p. 70.

the fixity, the regularity, and the certainty of a planetary movement. Take any, no matter what, example in history or in art, of stirring tragedy, and this definition will be justified."

"Most of those," he continues, "who are the spectators of a tragic event or catastrophe are unable clearly to describe the profound impression which they receive from it. Their imaginations, their consciences, are stirred; but they do not think of analyzing the signification of this; they see only the terrible or the grandiose side of tragic things. Nevertheless, there are terrible things which we cannot call tragic: the hurricane, for example, when it passes over without causing great misfortunes; and there are grand things, such as the sea when calm, but which again are not tragic. The terrible as such, and the grand as such, are not enough to constitute the tragic element. It is necessary that there should be, in addition to these, the revelation of a law, or of a superior direction of things. The ancient drama for a long time confined itself to the external side of tragedy, showing in it little more than fatality. . . . But to-day, as in the old times, it is really the manifestation of the superior law of things which constitutes its value and its true character. A powerful empire which falls, undermined by internal vices long concealed under brilliant appearances; a benefactor of

humanity who, at first received with acclamation, perishes, the victim of human wickedness; a catastrophe which engulfs the most legitimate hopes, the most tender affections, all that recalls the inalienable sovereignty of the moral order, or of the frailty of our best combined plans, or the necessity of aspiring after eternal spheres as the only region in which the supreme sentence of destiny is pronounced;—all this is tragic, and deserves the name." "Man is led by a secret tendency of his being to love the tragic and to find pleasure in its contemplation." "This is because there is a mysterious affinity between that mind and this superior order of things, which tragedy reveals; and the more the human mind is developed, the more it is sensible of this emotion which stirs it to its depths."

Réville might extend the applicableness of his fine analysis. This contemplation and awe of the irresistible course of law, in every department of phenomena, is the occasion for the birth of the latent thought of the deity, and upon it man throws himself in his craving to deify. Let me emphasize this additional importance of Réville's thought. I mean to say that the perception of sovereign law is not, as according to Max Müller, confined to the moral world alone, but that the Aryan religions also, which he defines as simple

nature-worship, must be reduced to the same original taste for the tragic.

With this as a guide we can attempt to ascertain why Max Müller was constrained to say that "the gods of the Aryan pantheon assume an individuality so strongly marked and permanent that, with the Aryans, a transition to monotheism required a powerful struggle and seldom took effect without iconoclastic revolutions or philosophical despair." The transition from polytheism to monotheism must have been slow, and must have involved an inevitable contest, since it is not difficult to perceive that the popular mind could not turn readily from fearing and venerating catastrophes of matter into heeding the less obvious instances of an omniscient judicature, to turn from rightness of action to righteousness of motives, from legalism into ethics. It implies not two stages of theology, but two different phases of culture.

On the whole, the distinctive doctrine of Judaism is its rounded conception of divine unity. With regard to this conception of unity, the contrast between polytheism and monotheism is not precise. Aside from the total negation of the materiality of God's being, there is characteristic to the Jewish conception of God, that he is considered to be absolute, a thought which makes an uncompromising contrast between it and paganism.—There is a

step in the ascent of this thought, which must be first well noticed, or else there is misunderstanding. Monotheism, in the Jewish sense, is more than oneness of God, more than a protest against multiplicity of deities. It is deified individualism[1]—the highest soul in the greatest magnitude, with the vastness of power, with the infinity of efficiency, with the unapproachable grandeur of exalted being, but also with the infinite delicateness of virtue. The Jewish God is Supreme, in the natural as well as in the moral world. It may be convenient to classify the aspects in which He becomes manifest. But in Himself, He is the substance of all life—nay, He is "The Life," pulsating in the universe.

[1] Quoted by Kaufmann, "Die Attributenlehre," p. 24. "We say God is one. We mean he is one, neither in the category of greatness, nor of the reverse ; one, not as to the fact of creation, but in complete absoluteness, in which there is no differentiation nor consistency of component parts ; one in supremeness with no analogy. All this is equivalent to saying : He is one, the first without beginning, the last without end, the inducer of all events, the cause of all effects."—"Halichoth Kedem," p, 73 and Fürst's "Orient," 1847, p. 620.

CHAPTER II.

SPONTANEOUS RELIGION.

In what I shall say now concerning the fundamental doctrine of Judaism and concerning that, which in the study of the history of religion is found to be the essence of religion, the essence of Judaism and the essence of generic religion are identical. Let me ask the reader to take two words as synonymous. I mean, intuition and spontaneity. For I shall treat them as such. I believe I am not stretching the meaning of these two words too far. Both are attributes of our soul-life, and both imply that they are present at the inception of mental activity. Intuition is an innate disposition, spontaneity is that likewise, with an additional element. Spontaneity does not stop at suggestion, but it also induces work. In the conception of religion, a native disposition and a direct effort on the line of it, are constituents. It is incumbent on a religious man not only to feel religious, but he must also not delay the doing of the duty. The fact is, that the suggestion of faith has an inner necessity, which compels the *act*. We shall, therefore,

forego etymology, and use intuition and spontaneity for each other.

I wish to intimate that there is a way of conceiving religion, in which the interchange of these terms will not only be granted as an indulgence, but perhaps be required. Let me explain. It is agreed that whatever is immediate in the sphere of speculation is elementary. The axioms, which need no proof, are elementary; every man is willing to admit them as true without any further trouble. They are immediate. They are the brick with which the thinker builds up his speculative structure. Let us attend to this subject more closely.

The barbarian infuses into his surroundings the poetry that is in him; he personifies, all events become alive, and every thing in nature is akin to him. You see how man, in his primitivity, was no mean idealist. The whole world was his kin[1]; the gross matter had for him a spirit in it, by virtue of which it as dear to him as the glorious day of summer was dear to the cultured Emerson. Strange contrast; still so natural. The soul, which goes out into the vast fields of the earth, to pick up stray

[1] "God said: Let us make man! With whom did he take counsel? Rabbi Josua says, in the name of R. Levi: He consulted heaven and earth. R. Samuel bar Nachmani says: He consulted all the creations of every day."—"Bereshith Rabba."

hints of logic to discover God, is poor and pitiable. But he, whose heart is open to the bountiful inspiration which streams in from creation, and who hails every atom of the universe as his brother, fashioned like himself by the hand of the Great Father,[1]—I say such a one, though he be aboriginal, stands upon a high plane which, for this redeeming communion, I would like to call culture, if I could.

The earliest religion was a religion of personified nature, and I have long noticed a poetic strain, having its source in aspects of natural beauty, which runs through all ancient religions, for which I have looked with much disappointment among the later phases of belief,[2] and surely in vain in the modern schools of rationalism and of philosophic eclecticism. They have crowded all poetry out of religion. I do not know how far they wish to go in their

[1] "He gathered dust from the four ends of the world, red, black, white, and yellow . . . Why from the four ends of the world?—If a man go from the east to the west, and die there, the earth shall not be able to say: 'Thou art not of mine, go to the place where thou wast created.' Every spot on which man is, is kin to his body and to it he returns."—"Bereshith Rabba."

[2] Even into practical Judaism an almost metaphysical name of God came to be current; *vid.* "Midrash Rabba," 117. "Why do they call God "Mokōm" (Place, or Space)? because He is the Space of the world, but the world does not encompass him."

rationalism ; but I care not to what else they have recourse to reconstruct upon a logical basis the principles of conduct, they must not neglect the inherent love of man for the poetic. Speaking of poetry in religion I do not mean the artificial coördination of syllables and sounds—an art beautiful in itself, sometimes noble, but never a natural intuition. We want rather symmetry of thoughts and of sentiments.[1] I speak not of verbal poets, nor of artistic fancy, which is charming, but as far from poetry in the wide sense as the repeated striking of the key-note is to the swelling and resonant and sweetly responsive song of the nightingale in the branches in the silence of the night.

There is suggestiveness in nature, and the first men felt it. The open and ingenuous face and the clear lisping of the child are evidences of a pure soul-life and kinship with God's world. On this account the religions of antiquity are attractive, because they bring to us the record of a time, when the life of a man was unreserved, when left to himself, the intuitive sense led him to the spring of truth as directly as the birds, after the winter is gone, find their home when the air is clearing, the grass is

[1] Therefore, by the way, Semitic poetry, notwithstanding its poverty as to versification and prosody, is the best type of poetry we have.

again stirring, and the little brooklet is murmuring again in the meadow.

It is hard for us now to realize how strong the imagination can be, so much has our native instinct been dulled. Now the glorious spirit leaps about before our eyes in thousand glowing colors, his voice laughs in myriads of merry sounds almost in vain.

But let us once more imagine the position the primitive man was in in this eventful world; we shall perceive in an approximate way that there were temptations for his fancy to roam, and that his unbounded and youthful imagination saw the deity even where we do not suspect. They say man *feared* the gods and therefore worshipped them to appease their wrath. But they are wide of the mark. The child is not afraid of his parents, in fact the unsuspecting child has no fears whatever; should the child-man have feared? He felt insecure at night when the sun had sunk and darkness had set in. His miserable tent was exposed to the prowling beasts. But when the morning came, and in the east the clouds became gilded, and the sky grew bright, and the sun rising, slowly drove the clouds before him, did he not rejoice; and did he not forget the night? An immature child takes every thing seriously, and rarely has sense for humor. In our youth we are uncompromisingly serious, and so I am bold to

say, the original man was. He accepted all experiences in the sober spirit of fatality. The night was an evil; but the day was joy. The thunder was Satan, who dashed the clouds down from the sky, pouring a flood upon his frail tent; but the light in the heaven was kind, and kissed away the clouds, and brought the plants out of the soil, and breathed fresh red life on fruit. To him the birds sang their anthems and languishingly bade adieu at the break of the dark, when he dipped down into the underworld and went out of sight.

We have not as vivid a conception as the man in the early day had of the display of power, when in the seasons, as they alternated, the powers of nature swept down streams of water and extinguished the sun, which henceforward shone like a mouldering coal, growing pale and pallid; when the wind swept across the plains and made them shiver; when, at the resuscitation of the sun, he soon regained his strength, and shot down hot arrows, burning the parched fields. The barbarian was witness to this play of Good and Evil. The man was a great questioner, like our children of to-day, who, when once their curiosity is aroused, have many questions to ask. But he asked and answered himself. There was the work of Providence; but what did he know of Providence? We, in our dry, philosophic

habit, hold to that word, and for want of a more suggestive name use that. But he wanted persons, not names. He wanted a soul in the universe, not an abstraction. And so he made himself a Father in Heaven—a name which we to-day have not improved upon.[1] The sun is the good shepherd, who, at every rising early in the morning drives the cows, the clouds, to the pasture. The thunder is the heavy hammer which the hero of the heavens swings to smite the overbearing sun of the noon-day. The waves, throwing themselves tumultuously in the sea, are the steeds, which wantonly cast up their heads and backs, and are lashed into obedience by Neptune and Okeanos.

These features of poetry and of personification in the primitive faith might be appre-

[1] "Thousands of years have passed since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the north and the south, the west and the east; they have each formed their languages, they have each founded empires and philosophies, they have each built temples and razed them to the ground; they have all grown older, and, it may be, wiser and better; but when they search for a name for what is exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they wished to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite, they can but do what their old fathers did, when gazing up to the eternal sky and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far, and as near as near, can be; they can but combine the self-same words and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven-Father, in that form which will endure forever 'Our Father which art in Heaven.'"—Max Müller: "Science of Religion," p. 72.

hended as having their source in one bent of human nature. That properly they have. But there is a difference between poetry and personification. The one is a disposition, the other is more. The former glides easily into the latter. Though it is an earlier fact of experience to say God is like a father, it is transformed into a conception that he is the Father actually in a later stage. It is after a consciousness of an intimate relationship between ourselves and God that we turn our eyes upward into the clear blue of heaven, spread out our hands, and cry: "Our Father!" In religious practice the child-man saw that father, heard him. There was no delusion, no connivance in his heart, that, though pleasing, these fine words and visions were nothing but words and visions after all. They were real and serious. The entire mental world, every thing, was taken at first hand in unquestioned verity.

Now, in the beginning of the history of religion (and I am going backward very far into the primitive times, where records fail us) all psychical phenomena were reflex, similar with reference to their mode of origination to the mechanical contraction of the biceps after external irritation; they were uncalculated, simple, immediate effects of causes, which carried in themselves the provocations of appropriate actions.

How do we move? How do we see? Do I think and precalculate every time I move my hand or my foot? Do I know, every time I see, of the mechanical work done, that I am putting my eye into a proper position, so that the rays of light can impinge on my retina and my optic nerve can carry the sensation to the brain? Nay, do not these events take place without consulting me at all, and I must see, whether I will or not? I touch by accident a burning coal; I pull back my hand. I have not thought of the matter; I have pulled back my hand even before I was aware of the danger.

The aboriginal man did not speculate; he was happily ignorant of complicated systems, of dogmas and doctrines. He had no theory of nature; he was, in fact, in every respect, bound up with nature. Thousands of experiences and events came upon him as so many occasions, demanding him to act. He led a sort of intuitive life, and his activities were all spontaneous. He was a child of nature, that knew not of obligations and still was held down to the laws which he thought he could transcend. His knowledge was only an aggregate of details, presenting themselves singly in a detached manner from day to day. He had no science, not the faintest suggestion of a generalization other than that which his sensuous experience

would suggest as profitable and harmless. Experience was reflexive; in these his mind responded promptly at the incentive of a sensation. It was a regular life. Despite crudities and barbarities, it was a life such as was led according to the dictates of an organic constitution, and this is normal.

But an ideal which I like to indulge in, is that the final religion, too, will be marked by this feature, the ennobled conduct will be spontaneous, at any rate that we are approximating to this soul condition. Culture refines, spiritualizes. If the health of body conditions the health of mind, why should the soul be debarred from reciprocating at some time? The virtues often sustain our physical life. What self-subjugation can do by repression is accomplished gracefully and to more lasting good by the slower effect of moral discipline. There is to every observing person a charm in the offer of sympathy; the worth of it lies not in the assistance rendered, but in the fact that it came without solicitation or appeal, that it was spontaneous. The child's confidence in the first best man is fascinating. The manner in which it confides its little affairs is a charming simplicity, which we fain would have children keep for their maturer years. But, when these maturer years come, if all this has not been outgrown, we look eagerly for the

manifestation of heartiness. Still it can be seen sometimes in old people who have happily preserved their good nature despite bitter experience, and there are some who have maintained a sovereign freedom in manhood. These might be observed with benefit if we wish to conceive what is promised the good man of the future will be.

Experience disciplines, and we are chastened organically as well as ethically. What accumulation of discipline and chastening is likely to accrue to us in the long history of culture! Here, then, is the ideal of the heir of the prolonged discipline, historical, many-sided, and universal. He will respond to worthy suggestions, as the fibres of the violin respond to the vibration of a note of the strings, and there will be consonance with the outer world, which he will cultivate, such as poets dream of. The deed will follow the efficient thought, the act will be the associate of the sentiment. True thought, feeling, and deed will be one. There will be a spontaneity in all departments of human activity, and it will not be the labored result of cogitation and of calculation, but each righteous man, being inured through his entire being to the conception and creation of worthy doings, will be transformed into a spiritualized organism, as it were, where there

shall be a regular and a conscious and on all sides self-realizing manhood.[1] He will know that there can be no a stop at the acquisition of merely formal truth, and that nothing is complete till the thought is transformed into *deed*. Then the truth shall be understood, which now is simply a glimmering ideal, that *desiring* the good has no merit, and none must content themselves with simple desire; but rather that the thought, barren of action, is inane and worthless, even though it plead its intrinsic worth ever so much. The man of the future will know the good thought can never be barren, but has its own vitality and energy, which urge it to the carrying out of it. There will be an immediateness between the intuition and the motive. There will be no interval between them. All right action will be spontaneous and the religious man shall set into scene his religious life, striving to attain to organic certainty, such as creation now is pursuing in the broad realm of being.[2] There will be thus in every

[1] Frederic Harrison, in a brilliant rejoinder to Herbert Spencer's Euhemerism, says: "The final religion of enlightened man is the systematized and scientific form of the spontaneous religion of natural man."—"The Ghost of Religion" in "Nature and Reality of Religion: A Controversy," p. 47.

[2] In "Berachoth," 10, a, an analogy is drawn between God and the human soul, which is an evidence of the conception of the primitive purity of man's nature: "As God fills the universe, so the soul fills the body of man. As God maintains

man of such a robust type a microcosm,[1] a small world, sufficient in itself, and will exemplify the divine thought as it never before was exemplified, law in its highest characterization, the divine thought continuously productive, a glorious seed that shall thrive, and there will be little to hinder its growth and unfolding, save the will of God.

The history of the religious life of mankind begins and ends with spontaneousness. But the first chapter is sensuous spontaneity, the immediate action of the senses, rising slowly out of the grossness into the spiritual. But out of the chrysalis another being is arising with the same body, but transformed, passing through the various stages of transformation into a condi-

the universe, so the soul maintains the body. As God is pure, so the soul is pure. As God resides in the centre of the world, so also the soul is the innermost principle of human life. How proper then, that the soul, similar to the divine soul in these five excellencies, shall adore it: 'Praise, O my soul, the Lord!'"

From this passage, of which many similar ones could be cited, also this can be gathered: Jewish theology does not wish to do away with natural religion. Nay, it makes it its own. The native instinct is acknowledged as divine, and the physical life of man is made correlative to the divine. Animism in the highest degree and theology are harmonized in Judaism.

[1] This thought Salomo ibn Gabirol anticipated long ago. See his "Fons Vitæ," § 9, Man is an "Olam Katon."—Cf. Dr. B. Beer, in Frankel, *Monatsschrift für Geschichte u. Wissenchaft des Judenthums*, 1854, p. 249.

tion in which the new living is no more simply the product of organism. Dependent upon and having its possibilities circumscribed by it, but transcending the realm of body, it will have a more spiritualized character. Muscles and blood and brain and nerves are deprived of their office as informers and advisers, and are pressed into service to do that which the emancipated spirit commands by its sovereign will.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION AND THE SECTS.

Speaking conventionally we look for acts and not for intentions. The standard by which the state adjudges citizens has had mischievous imitation. The judgments of the practical and of the sentimental diverge. The good citizen is not implicitly entitled to credit for religiousness; for all common purposes the community is content with a temperament which simply refrains from evil doings and makes no effort to induce the meritorious to voluntary righteousness. The civil and economic life is detective besides being protective; but detective in the derogatory sense of the word. The state cares not to award honor to the law-abiding, but much more to visit the law-breakers with the weight of its corrective authority. Religion cannot carry out its condemnation as severely, but awards praise more effectively. Religion has no means of executing its judgments. It lacks disciplinary and executive power. Religion once had it, and that time of the union of church and state was very sad.

Historians who narrate it would be glad to slur it over. It has been found better to disarm religion of administrative power. Since then religions are less of a disturbing element. We feel now that there is something besides court and legislature that we are responsible to. We owe allegiance to our sect. It seems as if sectarian dictation were exerting no mean strength, and to many it is a heavy cudgel. Nay, most people have grown rather fond of following it.

Sects are the diverse attempts of the human mind to solve the problems of being. In a common way, we might say, sects are so many classes into which humanity has divided itself. The most matured minds and some who are still worrying along with the elementaries, are learning the lessons of religion. Providence has wisely graded the lessons; but in the end the knowledge will be the same. Sects are propedeutic. The one, in his crude way, tries his stunted brain on the problems so mysterious and impenetrable. Sir Samuel Baker asked Commoro, chief of the Latooki: "Have you no belief in the future existence after death?" "Existence *after* death," says the poor fellow, "how can that be? Can a dead man get out of his grave, unless we dig him out?"

"Do you not know," persists the inquisitive and dogmatizing traveller, "do you not know

that there is a spirit within you more than flesh; do you not dream and wander in thought to distant places in your sleep, nevertheless your body rests in one spot. How do you account for this?" Commoro: "Well, how do *you* account for it? It is a thing I cannot unstand; it occurs to me every night." He brings him the message of St. Paul; he tells him of the decaying seed, and how it will rise again in all the glory of its array. And the child-man answers: "Exactly so, that I understand. But the original grain does not rise again; it rots, like the dead man, and is ended. The fruit produced is not the same grain that we buried, but the *production* of that grain. But my children grow up like the fruit of the grain."[1] Perhaps some of us would answer no differently; still there is a long stretch of civilization between the savage and the present state of culture.

It stands in the way of a proper and just conception of religion to deny that the savage has a mind, latent with rational suggestions; to say that his guesses at the universal truth,

[1] Quoted in Herbert Spencer, "Ecclesiastical Institutions," Pt. VI. of "Principles of Sociology," p. 672.

Incidentally let us cite analogous arguments of the Talmud, "Kethuboth," 67; "Sanhedrin," 90, b.; "Sabbath," 30, b.

For another curious instance of primitive philosophy of religion, see Sir John Lubbock, "Origin of Civilization," New York, 1870, p. 200.

which he made in his day, with his intellectual means, as we make them in our way, are meaningless babble. It certainly is improper to say that his practices, which he indulged in fervently, were criminal, simply because we do not understand them, and because they have not our sympathy. The religion of the savage suffices for the purposes of his life, the activity of which is at any rate circumscribed. He is withheld from doing mischief to his companions by considerations, and it is wrong to reprehend them dogmatically. They are, notwithstanding their crudeness and heterodoxy, valid enough to bring into the tribe a certain sense of order and mutual understanding, even of compact and of fraternity. Still such are our received notions, that we may be aware of the fact that he often has a high regard for a promise given, and he may thus give evidence of an intuitive humaneness, which is undisguised, being the voice of purity, a divine soul-life. Still this all goes for naught. The least, however, we can say for it, and we have said a great truth: "The religion cannot rise above the state of the votary." [1]

Max Müller, prophetic of the glorious future to dawn for mankind, and appreciative of all phases of religious history declares, that

[1] Emerson, "Conduct of Life," *Essay on Worship*, Works, Boston, 1885, Vol. VI., p. 196.

"there never has been any religion consisting exclusively of the pure and simple tenets of natural religion,"[1] and that "the tenets of natural religion, though by themselves they never constituted a real historical religion, supplied the only ground on which revealed religion can stand; the only soil where it can strike root, and from which it can receive nourishment and life."[2] By it he means more of the natural disposition of the religious faculty more than a preëxistent fund of religion, which is self-sufficient. He has in mind a demonstrable fact that sects have validity in so far only as they are in harmony with and corroborate, not an *a priori*, primeval, and revealed dispensation, but an intuition, which, being an organic capacity, permeates and seeks its coördinate, and flies from what it feels to be inherently hostile.

[1] "Science of Religion," p. 44.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

In Sluczki's edition of "Choboth Haleboboth," by Bachja ibn Pakudah, B. Goldberg gives a definition of "Emunah," which is extensively employed by the Jewish philosophers. "Glauben" conveys a meaning different from that of religion, and that again is different from faith, (p. xi.) Religion suggests authority, by the criteria of truth; Glauben, belief implies consultation of reason without questioning special revelation; faith, renunciation of personal choice, along with trust in a benevolent power; here authority of dispensation is external, and the suggestive aspect is predominantly emotional. "Emunah" is the first.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul, that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home." [1]

The rejection of a religion and the disparagement of it by votaries of another, takes place within limited capacities. The universalist despises nothing and finds causes for the being of every phenomenon. There is nothing concerning which he will moralize and declare that it was unhappy, or a failure. For, in the large area that he surveys, in which all indus-

[1] Wordsworth.—This thought of a preëxistent state, which in philosophy might be termed original mode of soul-being, is found often in the Talmud.

The Talmud holds "that there is a separate heaven for the souls, before they begin their earthly career."—"Chagiga," 12, b. "The soul brings from its pre-natal abode a dower of conceptions, whose original clearness, however, is lost at the entrance into bodily life."—"Nidda," 31, a.—"When the child is born and enters life, an angel strikes it on its mouth, so that it becomes oblivious of its former knowledge."—*Ibid.*

"The soul has previously known all which it experiences in this life in a previous existence; the sensuous impressions are merely the occasions or opportunities by which the soul is reminded of these forgotten former experiences." Cf. Moses Mendelssohn, "Preisschrift über die Evidenz in metaphysischen Wissenschaften," Schriften, Leipzig, 1843, Band II., F. 10. This may be occasionalism, not unlike that of Leibnitz.

trial as well as intellectual efforts are included, he is aware of the well-established fact that failures are almost intentional, as much as it is proper and well-intended that the little child should stumble and keep on falling until the chubby body has learned to keep its equilibrium. The intellectual immaturity of mankind must be exercised and taught in mental stumbling that it shall prepare the growing intellect to subsist on its strength, and trust in its mental poise.[1] And thus it does not surprise us to hear that the Persians denounce and stigmatize the Buddhists, and these again *vice versa*. The former, worshipping Ahura, the light, the Spirit of the Good, the joy-bearing sun, with the express declaration that they antagonize, nay spurn the teaching of Boddhisatva, it is natural and in the spirit of sectarianism a justifiable policy on the part of the Buddhists to cry horror at the innovators of their faith. Ahura was to them the Evil, the bearer of

[1] An interesting illustration is the remark made by R. Jaabez of Spain. He thanks God that the Jews have been put into the midst of Christians (with full knowledge of the bitter treatment they received at their hands). Christians, he says, believe in the creation of the world by God, in the examplars of the prophets, in the divine authorship of the Bible, in future recompense in heaven and hell, and in the resurrection of the dead. This fact brings the Christians nearer to Judaism than are the heathens. Besides, if the Jews had been surrounded by sensual heathens, there might have been inducement offered to waver.—" Ma'amar Ho-achduth," 3.

plague and of death, the adversary of men and of the Devas. The Persians were not slow to return the compliment. Up to this day it is a pious belief amongst them that the Devas, like goblins and spectres, haunt the abodes of men, lurking to do mischief and harm.[1]

Again, while in one sense there obtains an irreconcilable enmity between religions, there sometimes occurs a strange toleration which, however, is not indicative of any broader comprehension of the import of religion. The Christians of the first century, for instance, though Christianity must have appeared undisguisedly as a protest against the prevailing polytheism, were received comparatively well. But the explanation is, that it was the policy of the bishops, even of some of the Church fathers, to make concessions to the state religion, and it happened not infrequently that an emperor was admitted into the hybrid pantheon. The Christians attended pagan services almost as much as the synagogues. Among patristic curiosities the bland philosophy is not a little interesting, by which the early Fathers of the Church strove to prove that the gods of Rome and of Greece were real beings, existing as much as the Son of God, reserving the dis-

[1] "Yasna," XXX., 5 (Gatha Ahunavaiti) in Haug's "Essays on the Parsees," London, 1884, p. 150; also *l. c.*, p. 287, ff.

distinction, of course, that these are inferior and constrained to yield precedence to the heir presumptive. You see orthodoxy is here playing with fire.

Now, there is a primitive revelation. Let me remark that by primitive revelation I mean, not the revelation on Mt. Sinai, and by primitive tradition, of which we shall have occasion to speak later on, is not meant the Biblical tradition. Both are much earlier, in fact the earliest possible, at the very beginning of things, when the first man was fashioned by hand of Providence. Says Dr. Wise:[1] "Knowledge precedes science and cognition is prior to philosophy. Mankind knows vastly more than science and philosophy have utilized and systematized . . . The entire material of philosophy in all its disciplines consists after all of the spontaneous productions of the mind. Philosophy discovered the form, it invented not the substance of its contents." Again: "The natural man is the transition from the lowest to the highest degree of self-consciousness and morality in the man of culture and civilization, the man of history. It is all one first cause, developing gradually its various functions in the progression of evolutions. It is all self-conscious in the first cause to become again

[1] Dr. I. M. Wise "Cosmic God," Cincinnati, 1876, p. 150; and compare "Agreements and Disagreements," p. 14.

self-conscious in man. It is also the philosophical foundation of moral theology, without ignoring one fact of science."[1] In this primitive revelation we find the guarantee of that faith, which bears in its lap, seed like, the creations of peace and of good will.[1]

It is well known that it is maintained with respect to this original dispensation, by those, who conceive it to have taken place in an actual, tutorial communication, that God has withdrawn this gift now. He once gave it, but owing to the sinfulness of man, he has deprived mankind of it. The question naturally suggests itself, of what use was it then? And a useless thing like that, inefficient to accomplish the purpose, for which it was intended, was it divine? And can God proceed in a manner, which in a pedagogue we would find fault with? Mankind erred, let us say. It was a

[1] Salomo ibn Gabirol says: "The native rationality of man is related to faith as the head is related to the body. With the absence of the one, the other is made impossible."—"Mibchar Hap'ninim," No. 32. (Engl. translation by Rev. D. A. Asher, London, 1859.) Also: "A man's faith is perfect then only when his reason is perfect."—*L. c.*, No. 23.

See Philippsohn, "Israelitische Religionslehre, Leipzig, 1867, I., p. 35. The Jewish dispensation demands investigation before acceptance. Its principles should be tested by every one, both by reason and by considerations of affinities and sympathy.—Cf. Saadja, "Emunoth Wedeoth," § 17; Maimonides, "More Nebuchim," I., 50; II., 40; Albo, "Ikkarim," Part I.

natural error, for mankind was ignorant, at any rate is heir to foibles, and this eternity of groping is its punishment! Scarcely commensurate, hardly just! Still such a man as Gladstone holds to the doctrine with tenacity, and men of the Huxley and Max Müller type have coped with him in vain.

It is a fascination of pessimism. Because some are listless, or (we are ready to say) most people are not inured to the appreciation of the lofty doctrines of religion, as ideally conceived, or as theologically maintained, faith is a make-shift, a refuge, a compromise, at best, for the ills of life. It is a straw, thrown out into our eventful career to save us; but to those who reach out for it with uncertain hands, and have not learned the authorized manner of seizing hold of it, belief and faith may turn to be a thin reed, that pierces their hands. To find a logical basis for a religion of disparagement is difficult. The seeming listlessness of the mass of people to the holier conceptions is explained by the general status of their intellectuality. There is a direct ratio between culture and religion, just as there is between culture and optimism. By as much as we attain to enlarged knowledge, by so much we dismiss the suspicion that there is any thing arbitrary in the government of the universe. The truly cultured, as well as the truly righteous, are confident.

The primitive child of the steppes of Africa and of the luxuriant wilds of the islands of the Pacific has a similar and not much more disheartening fancy. The great unseen spirit once moved across the heavens and set a great heap of fir brush into the sky, lit it with his everlastingly burning torch, and swept forever out of sight of the tribe, and ever since the sun shines and glows and burns the parched fields. Here is Gladstone's primitive communication in its original and more natural instance. As here the savage supposes himself grievously abandoned, so Gladstone feels constrained to have unending sympathy and commiseration for orphaned humanity which has been set afloat in the sea of life, without compass, without guide, to drift, destined to sink!

Is it true? Can it be true that in this world in which, out of every blade of grass, in the complex of existences, in the harmony of powers, in the peace of the spiritual life of humanity, in the grand concerns by which these shall be perpetuated, viz., by the recognition and enhancement of them through man's religious conduct, there all at once could loom up a *plaguing* God? The whole world is replete with evidence that it is permeated with the spirit of a benevolent God. Is it possible that mankind is bound to be forever

dull to the thousand voices, which from every atom of created things declare to him who will listen the wisdom and the love of God? Does it not behoove us to have sympathy with the tardy children, and look more kindly on their tentative faith as a striving after the better, and upon their puerile solution of mysteries as efforts of mind which are promising and as earnest as are our own?

Primitive revelation! It is a good doctrine. Break off the bands; let the sweetness of it flow. God has revealed himself, and, like the sleepers that waken out of their slumber, one human being wakes up after another, and sees the morning dawn. That moment of awakening is the moment of revelation. It came to some in days gone by; it arrives to some now. I can well understand how religion originates. I notice the struggles of men who move in their respective spheres of life and engage in their work with such an ardent spirit, that they might be free from reprehension. I notice the noble yearning of men to attain gradually to a state in which there shall be serene contentment. And in this continuous effort for the noble and pure, I think I see a whole cycle of revelation, a never-ending series of divine instruction, which shall have its most felicitous climax. This is the hopefulness of religion; this is the faith, the inspiration that will once

conquer the world. If there has been listlessness, it was because the holiest offices of religion were delegated to one—that he performed them for the many. Out of the mass let the individuals rise! From conventionalities, which prolonged habits of representativeness have engendered, let each one step out in the panoply of his individuality! Let each for himself take up the task of right doing! And over this process of individualization the liberating spirit hovers, disengaging from the mind of men the falsehoods, which of necessity go along with imcomplete culture, and giving grand exposition of the divine powers in man. This is primitive revelation, primitive as is the soul of man, original as is his duty of labor, that in return for the work of his hands he gathers his food out of the lap of Providence.

But there is another fancy which stands in the way of understanding what is meant by religion. It is said: "This is the age of iron; the age of gold is gone. The happy time of innocence is no more; we live in the midst of a depraved mankind that has forgotten the command of God, and has not yet learned to know him. Religion, pure religion, once was, but you will never see it again." Réville remarks[1] very pertinently that this reminds him of the anecdote concerning good aged St.

[1] "Prolegomena to the History of Religions," p. 59.

Cyprian, who wailed over the approaching end of the world. The fruits diminished in bloom; they had no longer the flavor they once had, and which in his younger years he had relished so much. Alas! poor St. Cyprian had lost his teeth, his palate was worn, and his eyes were failing. Deplorable delusion this, to imagine the freshness is gone out of life when a little stimulus to our own eyes and more cheerfulness in our mental vision would bring it home to us so readily.

The presumption is, the origin of religion was a glorious shower of faith, which at once has ceased. Mankind started with a perception of truth, and its history is a continuous series of deterioration, a waning day. You see where this leads to. It takes out of the midst of men all incentives, all ambition, enervates men in their work in all occupations (for there is an intimacy between the intellectual and the industrial activities, as is just now becoming more recognized). Deny a man mental possibilities, and you have done the next best thing not only to stunt his intellect entirely, but to take from him all that is the worth of his life, which he himself has put on it. Say to mankind there is nothing great in store for it to accomplish, that, in fact, the valuable things it has are slipping out of its hands, and that it cannot prevent it; say to me that my

life-blood is oozing out of me, and that there is no saving of me. I will hold myself pious to resign myself to the inevitable dissolution.

History shows an ascending effort for betterment. Mankind lives for the future, and the present is continually opening out into still more promising times. There is much progression and improvement, with abundant suggestions of better things to come. The ascetic spirit that chews the cud of the past and blears gloomily into every new day as a new term of penalty, has never accomplished any thing, and it is the blightening spirit. The ideal drift, which happily is in man, those impulses and incentives which never rest content with present attainments, but are untiring to make new conquests and to gain greater victories, to these we owe all that, in the aggregate, makes up the nobility of life and the proud record of humanity.

Those are not fit to solve the problem of the origin of religion who ogle sanctimoniously with the past and see not even a glimpse of the great future dawning, and we accept a theory of religion with hesitation (we cannot help it) from such a source, whose waters are so murky. Whatever religious principles they present, however much they may cry out in the market-places "These are divine!" we refuse to recognize until they show that they imply cheer, promise, hope.

The life of all such theories of religion is short. Religion cannot be dealt with dogmatically. This lesson we are learning from day to day; and the history of religions, as they have appeared, bear home the grave lesson that it will not do to concoct a scheme of religion [1] henceforth to be abided by men, or take upon themselves the burden of heresy. Religion finds its best expression in the lives of great men, but no man, however great, can presume to stand for religion itself and save men the trouble of reasoning for themselves.

The time has now arrived when we have such an unfailing trust in the persistent and benevolent progress of the life, of the intellectual, of the industrial work of mankind that nothing will satisfy us with respect to the highest subject, viz., that of religion, except a suggestion of a happy destiny. The religion which stands over against such ideals, as now

[1] In this sense the passage in "Berachoth," 25, is to be taken: "Withhold your children from philosophy." A clear distinction between Judaism and philosophy is made in Midrash *Tanchuma:* Moses yearned to know the *ways* of God, Bileam boasted knowing God *himself*. Compare also "Exodus Rabba," 13. Viscount Amberly says of Positivism: "Auguste Comte's Positivism is weak, because he attempted to compose a faith for his disciples by the merely arbitrary exercise of his own ingenuity. He perhaps did not consider that in all history there is no example of a religion being *invented* by an individual thinker."—"Analysis of Religious Belief," I., p. 194.

have proven themselves a mere alphabet in the reading of the book of life, is a sorry parody, which may have historic interest, perhaps æsthetic value, but no intrinsic worth, and no place in the conviction of men.[1]

[1] *Kusari.*—Tell me, how did your religion originate, how was it disseminated, and how long a time was needed so that it became an established faith? For undoubtedly religions have their inception in the minds of individuals; these, devoting their powers to secure domination for them. They enlist converts, and thus enlarge their influence, till, through governmental aid, they become national?

Master.—In this wise only administrative principles arise and become valid, but not religion. They are rules of conduct suggested by reason, and when these are gradually perfected and obtain general acquiesence, they may be said to be of divine import. But divine religion, which has its immediate source in God, is instantaneous in its birth (*i.e.*, it is intuitive). As to it we can say with the Bible, just as at the first creative word of God: "Let it be, and it was."—"Kusari, I., 80.

Compare the dispute concerning the relative merits of philosophy and theology in "Kusari," I., 79. See also "More Nebuchim," II., 32.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGION AND DOGMA.

Religion is originally a sentiment, and consisted in the earliest times of spontaneous suggestions. To these, as the source, the popular view of religion can be traced. But it is difficult to realize how there can be a change of this inalienable feeling into a philosophy, which, by the fact that it is a creation of our mind, is a later phase of our spiritual life, no essential mode of our being. It is not beyond demonstration, and it is undeniably an event in the life of mankind, which obtrudes itself on our attention, that there was a transition from an unsophisticated state, in which religion was simply an affection, an organic disposition, into a condition of mentality in which, after once the intellect had wakened into self-contemplation and discrimination of surroundings, principles became articles of faith, and were set down as letter and law. There are two distinct epochs in history, that of emotional and that of theological religion, the one early, the other later.

But let me say distinctly, I am not willing to admit that the theological phase is in all matters an advance. I do not know whether it is a fanciful prejudgment, but there is an element present in the sentimental religiousness of many people, in whom I have had opportunity to observe it, which despite its crudity makes it seem to me worthy and acceptable. True, it lacks the finish a reasoned belief has. It is without pretense of intellectuality; but it is not less a strong faith, and is a modest effort which I am willing to place at the side of the speculations of great intellects. It has not the merit of being self-originated; but it is direct in purpose, and is an immediate outflow of a very undeceiving source. It comes unhesitatingly from a warm heart, and leaps confidently with one leap into the midst of the mystery we call religious problems, and solves them. As if there also a loving heart were pulsating. Sometimes I come to see that God has placed this yearning soul in us, and it has its own innocent way to come out from everywhere into the light of day, seeking and finding God.

Religion is a child of our heart, theology is a creation of our mind. The one needs a warm soil, and thrives only in the heart of man, the other shuns the emotional side of our make-up, and is calculating, meditative, scien-

tific.[1] Religion is aboriginal, theology is accessory. Religion is an intuition, that which was planted into the soul of man at the time when God put the seed of life into the universe. Theology is the work of man, an afterthought, by which he endeavors to parody the divine spark of faith, bringing together dry sticks of reasoning. Religion is eternal; theology a make-shift, which the exigencies of time and the compelling agents of Providence may throw into a useless heap. Religion is a work of art which God wrought into the spirit of man; theology an artificial construction of which circumspection only can postpone the eventual collapse.

The difference is simple and self-evident. Theologians attempted to reduce the religious life to a schedule of laws, according to which they thought they could regulate the thoughts of people. The spirit, however, is impatient of rules; there is no prescription to the workings of the divine. The divine has a way of its own; it will not be hampered, it wants a clear road on the

[1] "In peace and on an even plain he walketh with me (Malachi ii., 6), because he did not speculate subtly concerning the ways of God, just as Abraham did not."—"Jalkut Shimeoni," ed. Warschau, p. 308, col. 2.

So in Ecclesiastes vii., 29. "Lo, this only did I find, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought for many devices."

highway of life.[1] Though there is great respect in the universe for law, for order, though every atom and the great masses of mountains and of seas obey, though all creatures and organisms are submissive to the behests of the laws of nature, still the spirit is emancipated, and man, in so far as he is inspirited, is free.[2]

[1] The word *Ankh*, which is of Egyptian origin, signifying "life" or "he who lives," "the Living One," is found on inscriptions at Pithom,—*vid.* Brugsch, "True Story of the Exodus," ed. Underwood, Boston, 1880, p. 217. Compare with this, Kuttner, "Ha-emunah Wehabitachon," p. 2, who says *Anachi*, the first word of the Ten Commandments: "*I* am the Lord," is deducible from *Anch*, Plumb line, *i. e.*, "similar causes produce similar effects." Here already, then, we have "law" as a fundamental conception of divine being, which in modern phraseology is not unlike "the Eternal, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness," or "the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being."—Matthew Arnold, "Literature and Dogma," London, 1883, p. 37.

[2] "By every thing God pursues his purpose, even by means of a serpent, a frog, a scorpion, yea, even by a gnat."—"Midr. Rabba Vajikra," 143 a; *cf.* Ps., civ., 4, and Sirach xxxix., 36–37. See also Ikkarim, I., 14.

The affinity between God and man through the soul is made the basis of ethics, in a manner similar to the biblical ground for human righteousness ("Holy shall ye be, for holy am I, the Lord,"), in this passage: "As God is called the Merciful, the Gracious, so also thou shalt be merciful and gracious, and be beneficent to all. Just as God is called righteous in all His ways, so also shalt thou be righteous. Just as God is called the kind in all His doings, so shalt thou be kind."—"Siphri," Ekeb.

The Eternal is the prototype, to follow which is possible for man, because the divine soul resides in him.

To say the soul of man must feel, think, act as theology prescribes is like laying tracks for the wheels of Providence.

Theology, let us say, is a science. Whether a legitimate one let us not decide now.[1] If it is a science, and if by virtue of its being scientific, it presumes to have a right to do service as an *applied* science, it forfeits its claim. Religion is neither an abstract science of a metaphysical kind, nor an art among the other arts. It is the wisdom of history; it is the best in every phase of individual living, taught by the life of mankind during its eventful career. It will in the end of days stand for all the noble and precious things mankind has earned

[1] When Fairbairn says ("Theology as an Academic Discipline" in *Contemporary Review*, 1887): "Theology is used to denote a science whose field is coexistent with the problems and the history of religion, and we may say of the sciences as of religion, that since it has to do with every region of thought and relation of life, whatever concerns man concerns it," he forgets that theology is not so impartial. The fact is, that of all characteristics of theological studies none is so prominent, as well as proverbial, as their partisanship. The *raison d'être* for theology is, if not polemics against the heterodox, at any rate apologetics *pro domo*. Theology has a "Tendenz," *i. e.*, the theologian has his purpose and end fixed before ever he has started out. He has his conclusions already given. The business of theologians is to find corroboration for a preconceived whim. This takes it out of the realm of legitimate sciences. The science of sciences, the highest synthesis, such as the science of religion is, is supremely impartial, and is continually acquiring more and better material, and is the profoundest promise.

by its work and experiences. The history of religion is to humanity what biography is to an individual, in which the gist of it is the average capacity evidenced, and the nobility of it is instanced in the moment of greatest power. Religion and civilization overlap each other. It is the cultivation of the best abilities to the neglect of none. It is the harmonizing of all capacities. Matthew Arnold says: "Religion, the greatest and the most important of the effects by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself; religion, that voice of the deepest human experience,—does not only enjoin and sanction the aim, which is the great aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail, but also in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with that which culture,—culture seeking the determination of this question through *all* the voices of human experience, which have been heard upon it, of art, science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion, in order to give a greater fulness and certainty to its solution—likewise reaches."[1] And Emerson[2] puts it in his own

[1] Matthew Arnold, "Culture and Anarchy," London, 1882, p. 10.

[2] "Essay on Worship," Works, Vol. VI., p. 196.

inimitably terse and telling manner: "The whole state of man is a state of culture, and its flowering and completion may be described as religion or worship." Religion is an ever-active impulse, no philosophic theorem. It is an incentive which from the inward soul of every man radiates out into all the activities of life. Theology and dogmatism are the letter, religion is the spirit.

But in religious history theology constitutes an important chapter. It is not the happiest chapter. Theological history is sad; but it is a part which once was very significant, and which, even now, some are loth to forsake; and many would be indignant to be suspected of ever yielding it up. The reason is, that theology has usurped great powers. It asserts sole right to ownership of religion. But there is no proprietary claim valid on thought. That is public property.[1] I cannot imagine that any church or sect can claim more than that it has found the phenomena of religion at hand; and

[1] "They encamped in the desert, for this reason: If the law had been given in the land of Israel, they might have persuaded themselves to say: Ye Gentiles, ye have no share in this law. Therefore, the law was promulgated in the desert, to the people, in open assembly, publicly; so that all, who wish to receive it, may come."—"Mechilta," Parshath Jithro. Truth is public, and the good man is public, belonging to all.

that the one it found is the true religion. This is what it must assert.

We, who know the universality of the religious intuition, can appreciate these claims. We are apt to look upon the legitimacy of them as we would upon the allegations of a man who would come to us and seriously tell us that he has possession of the magnetism of the earth; and, though he will admit there may be other magnetisms flowing through the bowels of the earth, he will assert that this, of his, alone is the terrestrial magnet. You see the folly of monopoly. The forces of nature cannot be monopolized. The lightning, which comes down from the cloudy sky, will go down the rod of your house, and of mine, and everybody else's within the neighborhood. All men have the same chance to breathe the air. I hold religion is such a force of nature, but the noblest. Religion is a free gift of Providence, and the only imperishable one. But it is as elementary as fire, as air, as electricity, as the trembling column that bears the light through space from the sun in the vast distance to the little iris of my eye. As little as you can lay your yard-stick on the majestic clouds, sailing along over your head, you can put your theologic gauge on the sublime sweep of religious emotion. As in the past, so through the future of mankind.

Definitions of religious principles are proper; but not limitations to a partisan conception of them; and, above all, care must be taken that the doctrine preferred be the wisdom of experience, a generalization of discreet understanding, probed and tested; but no standard of camp, no self-imposed assertions to impose in turn upon others. It is perilous to stake our sectarian existence on a theological obstinacy. Providence has an irresistible way of her own. Who knows, some day Providence may set it into her head, having shrewdly prepared the way by a gradual unfolding of her culturing plan, to throw the whole construction of theology into a heap; and what then? We must take into our reckoning the consent of all-wise Providence. No teaching will stand, save it have the tacit consent of the divine thought, which manifests itself in the universal order and in the unfailing vindication of the just and the true.

Let me, in a few words advert to the position which Jewish teachers have thought fit to take with regard to the temporary character of religious dispensations and to the universal religion. It should be taken as significant of more than mere sectarian presumption, when we find the following declaration in the Midrash. The inception of the world is to be accredited, with regard to its source, to religion,

and as to its ultimate purpose, to the eventual vindication of Israel.[1] One, who is conscious of the profound content of religion and is imbued with the conviction, that to do justice to the aspect of religious doctrines and to give it that validity which makes them scientifically certain and comprehensive, will naturally fall into fulsome rhetoric. He feels that, despite the extravagance of words and the verbal ostentatiousness, his subject is in itself essentially grander than words can paint, and goes farther into the secrets of the universe and of God than his meagre vocabulary and ambitious phraseology ever can portray. We meet such boastful language in the prophets, which must always be taken as the demonstration of an impulsive attempt to reach the unattainable.[2] A mind that has monition of the presence of a Great Spirit,

[1] "The Pentateuch begins with the words, 'In the beginning,' to suggest that the creation of the world and the Thora and Israel carry out one identical purpose of God."—"Midr. Rabba," Gen. 1.

[2] Matthew Arnold says: ". . . The spirit and tongue of Israel kept a propriety, a reserve, a sense of the inadequacy of language, in conveying man's ideas of God, which contrast strongly with the license of affirmation in our western theology. 'The high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy,' is far more proper and felicitous language than 'the moral and intelligent Governor of the universe.' Just because it far less attempts to be precise, but keeps to the language of poetry and does not essay the language of science."—"Literature and Dogma.," p. 34.

that ties down the universe to His own person, and feels that the changes and the vast web of fortune are the work of the unseen hands of that Spirit, whose unceasing activity he has observed in a transient conglomerate of matter made supremely intelligent—such a one, notwithstanding eloquence and skill, is like Moses of old—only a stammerer, of uncircumcised lips. So here the bent for order and for peace (this the religious disposition is, no more, no less) maintains the universe, and works out that consummation. This is meant. The origin of the world, in the creative thought of the deity, is like the end of it will be. As coming from God, so in returning to him. The beginning and the finality of the design being in God, the two terms, beginning and end, are identical. God puts a soul into men, and this soul shall have grand revelation. Struggling amid the deterrent influences of body, circumstances and fateful conditions, the spirit of man will, some day, have glorious vindication. The life and history of mankind has, for its inward purpose, the emancipation and the open acknowledgment of its sovereignty.

There are allusions to universality in the literature of the Jews which, keeping in view the fact that their traditional legalism was scarcely apt to encourage it, merit special mention, for they are liable to be neglected. It is

more than simply an ethical (surely more than a caballistic) indoctrination, when even the Sohar is led to say that, "Every noble act awakes the power of a higher life out of its latency, and every rude and ignoble act weakens or deadens it."[1] Nor is the suggestive remark of the Midrash to be disregarded: "The first stage is that in which virtue looks up to God as its prototype, he being merciful; the second stage that of justice, in which the grace and the forgiveness of God becomes a nobler sentiment, though less delicate, that of justice."[2]

The philosophy of Maimonides is well known, and is being ranked higher since the subjective side of religion is looming up as a more important constituent in the determination of the quality of our religion and conduct. The effort of which this founder of Jewish philosophy never wearied is to find in every instance of mediocre or exalted religiousness a psychologic explanation.[3] He reduced the loftiest states of prophecy to little less than a genial, though in the unfolding of it a com-

[1] "Sohar," 403, 92.

[2] "Midrash Rabba," Genesis, xlix.

[3] "Iggereth HaRambam," No. 2; *cf.* Narboni to "More," I., 21. The soul of the creature is its essence, "Jessode Hathora," 4, 8. The essentiality of the soul is posited in "More Nebuchim," II., premise 10 and 11.

pletely normal, display of mental activity. This is *per se* an almost sufficient evidence that this democratic theology is preëminently Jewish. If others before him did not succeed in giving exposition to a similar conception of universality as to religion, it was not because they did not harbor the same conception, and I may say, the same sense of spiritual fraternity, but because it was in their time not the common method to speak in generalities, and to devise philosophemes of religion.[1]

The philosophy of the Talmud, if of such there can be any mention, is practical. It presents theorems not in logical concatenation, but as ingredients of precepts; and perhaps this experimental philosophy is not less legitimate. For us it will be for the present purpose immaterial to find the value of either theoretic or practical religious teachings. We wish merely to assure ourselves that it would be a grievous error to suppose that, because the apothegms of an axiomatic character or inductions that have a pleasing ring to them are not frequent in the Talmud, that on that ac-

[1] It is just to the much-maligned Sepher Yezirah to give space here to this declaration in VI., 2: "The heart is in the soul as the king in the combat." Compare with this Ghazâli "Eben Haphilosophim," in "Moz'ne Zedek," p. 40: "A man—his heart is royal (residing centrally in him), like a king in his realm."—Compare Jellinek, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala*.—Erstes Heft.

count we may suspect that universal teachings in Jewish literature are reformatory efforts only on the part of the few against the conservativeness of the mass. Nothing would be wider of the mark.

A catechism which pretends to being no more than a compilation of ethical particularities, we are in the habit of looking down upon as failing to fill the very first requirement. Religious inculcation must be adaptive. But it is obvious that in religious instruction there must be, as a matter of necessity, an identification of precept and example. The training of the mind and the heart, and more especially of the latter, for it is more directly involved in the formation of habits and of disposition,[1] can be made efficient only in the presence of the urgent demands of duties by parental or tutorial coöperation, not only by prescription. To *understand* what is right is not sufficient. The application of the abstract right gives worry. One example is more efficacious and instructive than many refined abstractions. And I hold that the Talmud is such a kind of catechism, and that its method is applicative.

The theology of the Talmud is insignificant In fact, with the exception of foreign importa-

[1] "A mere philosophical system, however true, can never take the place of religious faith."—Mueller, "Science of Religion," p. 43.

tion, which it will be our business to speak of later on, there is no appreciable metaphysics in Talmudic literature. It is Halachic, that is it concerns itself with fixing the law; and it occasionally delights in fancy and produces those sweet scented poesies which constitute the Haggada. These latter, moralists of the Jewish schools would offer for the delectation of the listeners and for their edification, and were intended to suggest thoughts in this loose and unauthentic manner, which otherwise might have been neglected. At any rate the Haggada was exquisite homiletics.

The feature of Rabbinic teaching is its habit of making sentiment and reason mutual, perhaps even of identifying them.[1] And here again we see the character of aboriginal faith felicitously repeated. It is not infrequently recorded in the Talmud how the Rabbis, I mention Rabbi Joshua ben Chananjah especially, were in dispute with philosophers; and in every case the native impatience of the Jew against philosophy is manifest.[2] We shall

[1] "A religion, to be accepted by any but an insignificant faction, must find a response not only by the intellects, but in the emotions of those for whom it is designed."—Amberly, "Analysis of Religious Belief," Vol. I., page 194.

[2] *Vid.* "Mid. Rabba" to Koheleth, *sub voce*, "All words are vain." "Baba Bathra," 9; also Hamburger, "Real Encyclopædie für Bibel u. Talmud," Strelitz, 1883, II., p. 1023–24; Instance also R. Simlai's answer in "Talmud Jerus." ed

have occasion in the course of an investigation of a chapter of religious history to see the disinclination of Judaism to tolerate the interference of philosophy in matters of faith. What was manifest in the special issue of the period of the origin of Christianity, was the persistent policy throughout the history of Judaism.

Indeed our explanation of Judaism and of the history of the Jewish people *per se* might be found in this very matter. The Jewish people are distinctive for this lack of desire for catechismal exactness. The Jew is ignorant of the formulæ of religion; in fact he is in such a frank state of religious ardor, that his bluntness to theological niceties can scarcely be looked upon as reprehensible. By this renunciation of abstractions and dogmatism and by this native love for empiricism, however, the Jew evoked no small amount of polemics. This is the everlasting disputation against the "First Covenant."

Krakau, p. 12, d., and "Niddah," 31, a; "Sabbath" 31, a; "Aboth d. R. Nathan" I. "Aboda Sarah," 54; "Mid. Rabba," Gen. i., Exodus, xxx.

CHAPTER V.

PROPHECY.

We shall have a word with the defenders of the doctrine that prophecies have been fulfilled. Such a doctrine of a fulfilment of prophecies is a legitimate phenomenon in the history of religion, but is unfortunate in the genesis of a faith. Much effort is exerted for the purpose of justifying hints supposed to have been made in Bibles and for making out that they were actually fulfilled. Pretension is seriously made that the life of one religion lies according to divine intention in the death of another.

It is valid and the conventional right cannot be impugned that a new doctrine claim predominance. But we have grown up in the habit of conceiving that along with innovation there must be improvement. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the assertion that a new revelation is simply a new edition of what the old taught long ago. In fact it seems to me, that in thus founding a faith, or in believing that one's faith is thus justified, we have good cause for wonder. If some one, praising his inven-

tion, or desiring to dispose of a patent of his, alleges naively, that it is *non plus ultra*, since it is identical with an ancient model, we should have reason for humor.

The dogma of a new faith, ambitious to take the place as a legitimate religion, but drawing the sap of life from, nay having its entire cause of being in another, is from these very circumstances polemic.[1] This is a serious weakness. A religion which starts with a combat against another repels. For it is neither an evidence that the later phase has a worth of its own, upon which it can rest its claim that it be received; nor is it an inviting spectacle to see a doctrine of peace and of concord starting its pilgrimage of salvation with a combat and a dispute.

But we have to deal here not so much with this inconsistency in practice as with the inherent faultiness of the conception of prophecy, which is implied in the practice, and which is the fertile source of false religion.

Religion is independent, as to its essence,[1] of bible, priests, and prophets. A faith must have a vitality of its own, and be acceptable on its own account. Any other legitimization

[1] "There is a difference between the prophets of Israel and the prophets of other nations. The prophets of Israel exhorted against the commission of sins, those of other nations caused a breach," *i. e.*, were sectarian, polemic.—"Bereshith Rabba," 20; *cf.* "Ikkarim," II., 28 and 74.

and support may warrant endurance to a sect. But the evangelization of men by the spirit of manliness and by the incentive, which the display of individuality offers, goes on spontaneously, and has its own method of generous and noble persuasion. I do not mean to intimate that the appurtenances, which customarily belong to the inculcation and to the preservation in purity of religious doctrines, are valueless. It is evident, however, that he who takes pains to determine his opinions concerning conduct, and lets them grow upon himself as conviction, and is bent upon exercising them in the form of the best actions, has very efficient reminders in himself. The antithesis to theological religion is personal religion; and the latter has its best exemplification when we are emancipated from the bonds of dogmatism, and walk unhampered upon the way of pure intelligence, resolutely devoted to acting according to the dictates of a chastened personality.[1]

Knowing, then, that in the perfect faith there is an approximately high degree of self-de-

[1] "All depends upon the conduct of a man. In accordance with the quality of that, the spirit of God can be said to reside in him."—"Pesikta" Parshath Para, and also "Midrash Rabba," Chukath. "The power of the prophets was profound, for they typified in human form the image of God."—*Ibid.* "I shall make of thee a great nation, *i. e.*, I shall make thee high-priest, like Adam."—"Tal Pijoth."

termination of religion and practice, we cannot say unconditionally that the shaping of our conduct is taken out of our hands, and that we are subserving merely a fore-ordained end—fulfilling certain prophecies.

The trouble in the matter is that in most sectarian religions the notion obtains that there is due on the part of the adherents an unquestioning loyalty to priesthood, episcopacy, papacy, and also an unquestioning belief in the identity of this priestly character of religion with prophetic authentication. They teach that priests and prophets taught the same; the prophets foretold to oblige the priests. We need, however, pretend to no profound scholarship in presuming to remind people that priests and prophets were scarcely ever on such intimate terms, and they never played into each other's hand. If it is asserted by the priesthood of modern sects that they have the corroboration of prophets, if it is said that their doctrine was foretold and thus legitimized, they commit a grievous misapprehension of the relation of priest and prophet.

Nothing is clearer in the history of every religion than this: that priest and prophet of a faith always disagreed; nay, the prophetic calling, in fact, is radically a protest against the usurpation and extravagant domination of the priesthood. This is historical, and is sub-

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stantiated by the circumstances of our time. There is even now a large number of intelligent people outside of the pale of the Church and of organized religion, who have withdrawn from conventional modes of ritual with intent and protest. Their integrity and character is irreproachable, and they will not, I am sure, be branded as irreligious because they protest against conventional forms of church-practice. They protest against hierarchy in religion. They cannot reconcile themselves to the sanctimoniousness and the artificiality which frequently pass for piety. They demand a vigorous and a self-asserting sort of religion. Somehow they cannot help speaking of religion as being manhood, and they are fond of believing that worship is not merely Sunday service, but a serving of the spirit of right, without looking at all at the precise day of the week. Their faith is not dreamy, but wide-awake, as behooves men in the duties of every moment of our eventful life. If they are not geniuses, inspired with a regenerative fervor, and borne along in the exaltation of a self-vindicating spirituality, they are, at any rate, somewhat conscious of a responsibility they owe, and which no one but they themselves can shoulder; they have a conviction that religion is solely their own matter. As little, they believe, as there can be delegation in matters of

morality,[1] but each one stands or falls on the strength of his merit, so in the whole field of religious activity determination of the proper course and principle is to be left to them, and not to any other one, to do that work for them. You see by thus insisting on standing for themselves on their own feet, they protest against the representative habit of Church-ritual. In this lies the reason why the hierarchies combat and struggle. It is the same war which priests always waged against the individualization of religion, to which the prophets devoted their energies untiringly.

The prophet in religion stands for the future of it; he is the spokesman, not of the infantile promises of local interests and of the enactment of surprising occurrences, but of the noblest content of human life, of that because of which the present is made worthy, and the past ceases to be a breath of air that has blown over us. He infuses into all departments the spirit of life, by teaching concerning the

[1] "When God said to Aaron: 'Thus shall ye bless,' the people of Israel exclaimed: 'The *priests* shall bless us? *Thy* blessing is the only one we require; by *Thy* decree we are blessed.' But God answered: 'Though I have said the priests shall bless ye, I shall be present with them, and I shall bless through them.' Therefore, when the priests spread forth their hands (in the recitation of the customary threefold blessing), they intimate thus symbolically, that God is about us and guards us by His Providence."—"Debarim Rabba," 11.

events, deed, thought, sentiment that they are the seed to bear fruit. Instantly, under his genial treatment, the ills of our condition are healed. For he has the balm of hopefulness. For the workman at his task he has the cheering word of encouragement. Labor is not a drudgery. Life is not filled with wants that forever plague and are never satisfied. Means, which are serviceable for all the needs of our life, have been put into our hands. We can fashion our character into beautiful proportions for contentment and delight. Towards the holy interests of mankind and the destiny of humanity to behold the undimmed light of truth; towards the everlasting ideality of humanity, which it attains to and progresses in; towards this most of all the prophet turns in the profound yearning of his soul, and in the brightness of his vision. If ever promises were given in the books of religious precepts, he gave them, and his will be fulfilled; such promises are the hopes, the exalted and the exalting ideals.

There is a high degree of sentiment in prophecy, too high that it should grovel in the dust amid petrified bones of "fulfilment." Prophecy is not a trick of foretelling. Should the prophets be simply the channel through which God is pleased to make manifest His supreme power of foreknowledge, little rever-

ence would be due to the spiritually perforated beings which let the revelation pass through them as through a sieve. God's men partake of His transcendency; inspired with His sacred breath, they are somewhat more efficient, and give better evidence of their selection and exaltation. Let us have greater respect for the geniuses of mankind, more reverence for the divinity, when it reveals itself in the most sanctified spot, the human mind and heart. There is not one word uttered by their lips but what a spirit prompted, which was conscious and felt deeply. But, I am not slow to admit, they were in the bounds of human virtue and human passion. As much as there is of the glory of spirituality in the prophet, there is also the admixture of the lowness and the limitation of body. He is never perfect, never angelic. This is the imperishable honor of the prophet, that he freed himself from the deterring influences of his time and condition and lifted himself on the pinions of his genius into the regions of profound contemplation.[1] From these he could look down and see more than many other men. His heroic struggle makes the great man exemplary and didactic. This emancipation and this greater vision, this prophetic exaltation, can be ours, is possible for all, if we will.

[1] "Kusari," I., 103.

This truth must be emphasized. I call attention to the condition. Self-determination is the prime condition. The constituents of this felicitous state of soul-independence, however, are not simply wisdom and energetic effort in the direction of wisdom. There is a third factor, which eludes us. But the product will never be right unless this third factor is present. There is a difference between complete manliness and geniality. The one is the end and completeness to which latent human abilities can be brought: the other cannot be accounted for in a mathematical manner.

The analysis of a genius will always leave something that we cannot account for; this is its exceptional feature. Our will can command the capacities at hand; but cannot create capacities. The genius is accoutred in a manner such as makes him recognizable at first sight. He is the best man. That much we may venture to assert. But the moment he has satisfied us as to that, and still transcends the standard, he is not any more of a class, but stands by himself. He is isolated by his genius. No amount of exertion of our will can make us associates of him. Some come nearer to him, as near as they well can; these are our men of talent. Genius creates, the talented imitates. The one discovers, the other invents. Genius creates in the twinkling of the eye, without

exertion ; the work comes off his hand in completeness and beauty, with grace and ease. The talented must labor hard and rest content with mere approximation to all this.[1]

Religious leaders, those who control the thoughts of the masses, are either geniuses or talents, according to the primal character of their temperament. They are, each of them, exemplifications of how high God has made it possible for the human mind to rise. The practical side of their life is another matter ; the results of their career must be divorced from their personalities. The geniuses must be estimated with respect to their intrinsic worth, and not to the temporal features of their work,

[1] Jürgen B. Meyer, in *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie*, von Steinthal und Lazarus, 1880, says : " Talent is conscious of itself, and knows the 'how' and the 'why' it arrives at its inferences and conclusions. Not so genius ; to it the how and wherefore are always subtle. There is nothing less self-conscious and less immediate than a genial thought."—He says further : " The imaginative faculty of talent reflects things and facts which have received already a greater or less amount of corroboration ; while the fancy with which genius is endowed presents matters never before presented. Talent is like a marksman aiming at a point, which seems to us difficult of hitting ; genius has a target which is not visible to our eyes. The novelty, it must be remembered, consists not in the material, but in the direction of the new shot sent forth."

" Talent may be inherited, acquired, and lost ; and genius is a commission from on high."—Dr. I. M. Wise, " Genius in History and History of Genius," *American Israelite*, March 17, 1882.

as to how they transcended their time and conditions, and, it may be, a stretch of time beyond their own.

It is precarious to apply the law of the survival of the fittest to matters of genial thought. Genius has not always the world to applaud it. Genius stands over against the mass of common men, and is more likely to incur their hostility than their enthusiasm. This feature in the life of great men is generic. All great men were misunderstood. Not only Jesus, but also Moses.[1] Happily they were full of faith and hope. If we would gauge men by their successes or failures, many a one, revered and honored, would be turned out of one pantheon. And, on the other hand, there is not one but thinks regretfully of the noble efforts of those unfortunate lovers of mankind, who dreamed of the felicities of human life, and were rudely awakened by the noise of merciless practicality.

To pass judgment upon Moses, Jesus, Buddha, or Zoroaster, according to their fortunes, and not to perceive their soul-career, is missing the very point of their greatness. Whether

[1] *Cf.* "Sanhedrin," 110, a.—"When Moses passed through the camp all the Israelites stood in front of their tents, until he had entered the sanctuary." The reason alleged for this is such, that out of respect for the memory of Moses we forbear expressing it. Let it be merely intimated, for the purpose at hand, that also upon his fair name the sacrilege of suspicion was cast.

Moses would not have been known of in Europe, and brought to esteem there through Christianity, and whether Mahomet popularized Judaism and Christianity in his native country and in all Asia, and similarly as to Buddha, are questions of fortune, incidental, not essential, to their dispensations. The paramount question is: Are these individually, in themselves, worthy? Does their personality reside in their dispensation to such an extent, that it is itself sufficient as an exposition of truth?

Is there among these any one, who belongs not to sect, or time, but to the world? As soon as Moses is a genius, it matters not whether he rode in the triumphal chariot, amid the plaudits of the people, or whether his hands were tied by the limitations of his circumstances, by race or by theology, or by tradition and conventionalism, he is a genius, through the fact that his person, his thought, every element of his character made him illustrious above all ordinary men, and revealed that he was moved by a mind transcending the given conditions by the faculty of vigorous perception Every one is genial, if, either by heroism or by fortitude he teaches about the divine in humanity.

A gradation of religious leaders is not easy to make. For we have our preconceived notions as to them. We have none of us grown

out of our sectarian teens; and the maturity of full-grown universality in spirit and temperament is not yet upon us. Besides, we ought to know these men by a sort of imitation of their subjectivity. We ought to strive to know them almost as they knew themselves. This is very hard. To delve into the mysteries of another man's soul-life is beyond our power. Only fancy can help us.

Let us recall here the distinction between genius and talent. Genius has only the intuition for its material, with which to accomplish its great work. Now, with this let the genius create a beautiful song, a statue, a law, a faith,[1] and let the talent parody it in his plodding manner, and carry it abroad. A Moses creating, a Homer, a Raphael, a Michael Angelo. Jesus promulgating,[2] Luther reforming. The Jewish people beholding the revelation at the foot of Sinai, and Christianity interpreting this

[1] "Just as the magnet attracts the needle, so Moses and Mt. Sinai were drawn toward each other in an instant."—"Sohar," II., 21, a.

[2] See the disciple regarding Jesus as a Hillel, Geiger's "Vorlesungen über Geschichte des Judenthums," in "Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft u. Leben," Jahrg., III., p. 30; and Rénan, "Vie de Jésus," Paris, 1863, p. 80. Even Delitzsch, in his rejoinder to both Geiger and Rénan, cannot deny *in toto* a striking similarity and possible connection between the humanitarianism of Hillel and the Messianic teachings of the Essenes. *Vid.* "Jesus und Hillel," von Franz Delitzsch Erlangen, 1866.

revelation and this Judaism to Europe. Here is a division of labor: the producer and the distributor; the genius and the talent.

True, the dissemination of the faith is a condition of its value. Some one may hasten to conclude, since Judaism needed the missionary labor of Christianity, without it it would not have been known outside of Palestine; hence, even from the Jewish aspect, the authentication of Christianity is made out. I fear for that sort of logic. Here is wheat to furnish bread. To whom shall we be grateful for this food? To the farmer? or to the good soil that produced the rich wheat? No, to the freight-car, to the railroad track, it may be to the engineer! Suppose the farmer had not planted, or suppose the soil had refused to bear? All the railroads in the world could not have carried one solitary grain!

The condition of will, therefore, is not relegated to us entirely. There seems to be in it also the will of God, a certain pre-determination, a contribution from the hand of Providence, in addition to those gifts, which are delivered to us.

Keeping this in view, we shall understand the thesis of Maimonides, who says: "We believe that, even if one has the capacity for prophecy, and has duly prepared himself, it may yet happen that he does not actually

prophesy. It is, in that case, the will of God [that withholds from him the use of the faculty]. . . . As for the principle which I laid down, that preparation and perfection of moral and rational faculties are the *sine qua non*, our sages say similarly: 'The spirit of prophecy rests only upon those who are wise [in intellectual attainments], strong [in vigor of character], and rich [illustriously endowed in morals]."[1] And he gives one example, amongst others, to illustrate his idea: "As to the revelation on Mt. Sinai, all saw the great fire and heard the thunder, that caused such an extraordinary terror; but only those of them who were duly qualified were prophetically inspired, each one according to his capacities. . . ." Moses rose to the highest degree of prophecy, according to the words: "And Moses alone shall come near the Lord."[2]

Notice his account of the Sinaitic revelation more closely: "There is, however, an opinion of our sages to this effect: The Israelites heard the first and the second commandments from God, *i. e.*, they learnt the truth of the principles contained in these two

[1] In this manner the Talmud explains these four conditions. *Vid.* "Sabbath," 30, b.

[2] "More Nebuchim," II., ch. xxxii. (English translation, "Guide of the Perplexed," M. Friedländer, London, 1885, Vol. II., pp. 163–165.)

commandments in the same manner as Moses and not through Moses. For, these two principles, the existence and unity of God, can be arrived at by means of reasoning, and whatever can be established by proof is known by the prophet in the same way as by any other person; he has no advantage in this respect. These two principles were not known through prophecy alone."[1]

It is sufficient to have adverted to this. Prophet and genius are synonymous terms.[2] There is a selection in both. The gift of prophecy is exceptional. It may be said that in such extraordinary personages we have

[1] *L. c.*, chap. xxxiii., Friedländer, p. 167. See also Joseph Albo, "Ikkarim," II., 18.

In "Kethuboth," 39; "Sabbath," 149, allusion is made in the peculiarly Haggadic style to the *a priori* notions of the existence and of the unity of God. All men and all women, of all nationalities, says the Talmud, were ideally present at the revelation at Mt. Sinai; yea, even all souls which will hereafter appear on earth in human bodies.

[2] "The mind, which originally conceives supersensuous truisms, together with the impulse to promulgate them, is called a genius. . . . Genius must. It has no will of its own. . . . If it is permitted to call the prophets of Israel geniuses, we must certainly be permitted to rank them among the highest of that kind; hence their characteristics are characteristics of genius. With them, there can be no doubt, one of the characteristics is that they spoke and acted by an irresistible impulse, contrary to their own will and happiness; hence this impulse must be characteristic of genius, at least in its loftiest state."—Dr. I. M. Wise, "Genius in History and History of Genius," *American Israelite*, March 17, 1882.

an instance of wisdom of the generations, having slowly accumulated and become clarified and finally individualized as the highest power of prolonged growth of communal culture. But it must be remembered that genius transcends time, and is not retrospective, but prospective. There is a wide difference between the great man and the prophet: the one sums up in himself the wisdom of his age, and by this subtle inspiration of popular wisdom is practical; the other however, is a dreamer, in an introspective state of mind, very impractical, an idealist.[1] The great man is a leader engaged in actual work, the returns for which he may be fortunate to witness. The prophet and the genius (it is sad but true) has not often the gratitude of his contemporaries, for these likely are not capable of appreciating him. He belongs less to them than to the coming times. If there is any prophesying of future events, the genius does it. He *is* oracular, but oracular of world-thoughts, and of universal, eternal aims.

[1] The Rabbis perceived the psychological character of prophecy, and attributed subjectivity to it; so that they are led to say: "Not two prophets declare alike what is communicated to them."—"Sanhedrin," 89, a.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

Coördinate with the history of the conceptions of religion are the histories of literature and of art. We are nowadays tending towards a view of religion in which, besides the theological authority, deference is also paid to minds maturing in literature and art. The religious effort is kindred to all ennobling kinds of effort which aim at creating the best, at giving shape to thoughts and to visions of beauty as the mind and the genius of men conceive them; ideas to realize which they yearn, and never cease yearning.

The first word of truth and of honor declared by a man who had the respect of his fellowmen, was the first bible. It was the heirloom which later generations held in veneration, until a newer and brighter and a timely word came out of the heart of another genius or prophet, which, in its turn, corroborating the worthy and the honorable in the first, served as the translation, as it were, of that first bible, done into a fresh and living language, so that

the humble man might understand it and take it to heart.

The life of the great man has always drawn admiration toward him because of his dignity of mind and of character, and has secured the obedience and obeisance of the crowd. Indeed so great became its influence that every item of his royal conduct became of concern and of interest. The biography of the leader became a sort of literature, which, passing at first from mouth to mouth among the fearing and the admiring, grew into tales and into narratives, and finally into literature. Thus the chief's or the leader's life and conduct became the prototype according to which the people should conduct themselves and emulate his example. It is evident that those who are keen to observe such an impressive guide fell gradually into a habit of imitativeness, and that this devotion grew upon them till it became venerable, to alter which was a lamentable heterodoxy, and finally turned out to be held sacred.

There is no department, neither in the mental nor in the emotional, surely not in the industrial activities of mankind, in which, if we would analyze the present complicated condition, we should not find constituents of hero worship. It seems as if this affection for genius and the awe at the display of excep-

tional power were ingrained into the nature of humanity, that not to submit at some time to them is likely an evidence of obtuseness. The conclusion is somewhat justified, that the stronger the spirit of individuality becomes and the more we insist upon the play of well-balanced determination as the proper and only creditable mode of character, the more this sentiment of admiration for the great man dulls, and the more, in the gain of independence, a loss is involved, which some will be loth to relinquish. We must have a hero at all hazards. He will be merely of a different kind.

Manliness is more than boorish strength. It must be chastened. Robustness is not strength. The fibres, communicating among themselves, exchange the delicate thrills of nervous pulsation. They are made efficient by coöperation. Human kind is more than an aggregate. The individuals coalesce into a unit, and the life-blood of the social organism is mutuality.

This mutuality of the members is evinced in the relation in which they stand towards the best man of the community. The benefits received from him unite them; the abuses shared by them, under temporary misguidance, bring them nearer to each other. And as for gratitude, it is given silently and as

affectionately as the child full of love looking up into the eyes of its parents. There is affection for the popular hero which does not rest content with encomiums and conventional honors, but goes as far as apotheosis and deification.

In the history of religions the hero celebrates his carnival of praise. Here the holiest matters are dedicated to him; here he is enshrined, and his name is set in an untarnishing halo. He meets us on the first page we open in the books which serve for edification. The lessons of religion generally take their texts from his life. The bible is his biography.

All races have their bibles, for each of them has its pantheon. There is a gradation of intrinsic worth, to be sure, and there are men whom we would not emulate. But they have had their following in their day, and the incense was burnt to them by a devout public, and so they must be given a place in the history of religion.[1] Nay, more; they must be estimated in a benevolent way. For, having been chosen leaders, do they not exemplify those who chose them? Are they not honored, for that which people thought worth honoring? So that we shall not dispose of *men*, nor decide their worth, but we deal with stages of civilization and epochs of culture.

[1] See page 84.

If the great man gives the text of the bible, the nation gives the spirit. For, evidently, that of which they are fond of speaking concerning him is their choice; and choice is a hint to character. Selection of a type of religious conduct is a testimony to the principle of religion, which they regard as proper. The holy books of the races and of the nations in history, the library of these alleged inspired books, which were successively venerated as the respective best rendition of the best thought and the best object, is an epitome of the history of civilization, a concise statement of what each people and each race and what all races and all mankind collectively have attained as the result of their prolonged efforts.

Analyzing these various bibles (and there are many of them) we shall adduce plentiful evidence of the tentative character of the intellectual life in the past and a conviction, also that for the future there will be merely attempts, a few more guesses at the same profound problem of eternity.

Some one stands on a high place, sees more and farther, from a clearer atmosphere in a brighter light. Moses, from Sinai, from a height of sanctified ideality, which is forever striving and shall never cease to strive after the best. Jesus preaching on the mount humility and asceticism which are liable to thin

out into a mortified transcendentalism. Mohammed, grasping for the eternal joys which his appetite craves for, unable to subdue it. Buddha, dissolving into dreamland, all consciousness dissipated, floating into a realm where the greatest bliss is: not to be. But each one of them has the hearts of many people. As such let us approach them with the earnestness of students and with the sympathy of men.

Will I be suspected of dogmatism if, after mature deliberation, I make an assertion and reserve judgment on the point? Balancing intrinsic values, and checking off differences, being careful to get to the residual quantity of the essential contents of the Jewish Bible, I claim that it is the best and the most promising expression of religious conception. I claim no perfection for it; that is beyond the scope of any doctrinal effort to attain. A bible is a record of tradition. Our own, leaving out of view the theological questions involved, is also a book of literature. But literature is avowedly a repository of either of two creations of mind or of both: either of the general mental habit of the people of whom it treats, or of the best thoughts of its most prominent men. The one is popular, the other is genial; the latter being as much beyond the people as ideality is removed from practice. Whatever is biblical (and I embrace under the term

"biblical" others besides the traditionally Jewish one) is literary as much as it is religious, historical as much as it is theological. The literary element in the characterization of the Bible should be dwelt upon more than is the practice, to the greater illumination of it.[1]

Literature is not foreign to religion; both are fed by the spirit of the people. There is not a line written to-day but what has for its substratum the religious tone of our time. Some render this general character of contemporaneous religion unconsciously, some lift themselves out of it, and by their profounder vision become known as prophetic. They are instances of a manhood, to the records of which reverence and later on sanctity are attached. Their biographies are transformed in the course of time into bibles, and their sayings are quoted as ethical maxims. Being frequently narrated they finally become proverbial and public property. I know not but what bibles are significant, besides through priestly authority, perhaps through the fact that

[1] "Some of these ancient sayings were preserved because they were so true and so striking that they could not be forgotten. They contained eternal truths, expressed for the first time in human language. Of such oracles of truth it was said in India that they had been heard, *sruta*, and from it arose the word *sruti*, the recognized term for divine revelation in Sanskrit."—Max Müller, Preface to the "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. I., p. xiii.

they enjoy recognition in a literary sense. Being universally acknowledged of superior order, we have a warrant for the literary worth of the Bible, since only the best products of mind are thus received. The public is fastidious in its criticism, and is as ready as a magazine editor to throw bad poetry and bad essays into the waste basket. The public uses it prerogative for recommendation as well as for condemnation. The Bible deserves being rated high that, through the shifting of public taste, it has stood its ground well. Even now no one has yet deliberately dulled his inherited veneration for this ancient monument of religious fervor so much as to throw the Bible off peremptorily, denying to it every good quality. That some believe to have found flaws in it may be a matter to disprove or to admit; but it is allowed on all sides that it is a tradition which depicts faithfully the intellectual and religious status of the Jewish people.[1] It is an acknowledged record, whose chapters and verses and language are the skeleton of the spirit which prevailed among the Jewish people. No work of literature can claim more. This claim being uncombated, even by the most radical critics, we may safely say that this credit is guaranteed to the Bible.

[1] See Colenso, "The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua," London, 1865, p. 176; and Wellhausen, "Prolegomena to the History of Israel," Edinburgh, 1885, p. 321, *et seq.*

But there is a proviso to be made, lest this be misunderstood. *Literary* value does not involve attaching significance to its literalness. In fact nothing is more diametrically opposed to the pedantic adherence to verbal exactness than literary effort. An author desires to render his thought. The thought is the prime aim. He throws the arrows of his words and phrases at the mark his genius has set. All literature is tentative, and biblical literature is no exception.[1] In so far as one of the component parts of the Bible is the product of individual mind, only an approximate rendition of the profound suggestion can be expected. No more. The prophet is profuse in similes; he is eloquent in the attempts to do justice to the sacred truths, he has set himself to be the oracle of. But though he dwells in a sphere of high intellectuality, the dicta of his intuition do not leap out of him in the full panoply of divineness. It detracts from the dignity of prophecy to expect the impossible from it. Let us be grateful for the abundant *suggestiveness* of the prophets, and then we appreciate them the more substantially. For to him who throws out the seed, so that it

[1] Matthew Arnold, "Literature and Dogma," London, 1883, p. 31. With respect to the enthusiastic temperament of the Jew and the consequent vivacity in Jewish writings and in the conduct of the Jews, see Jellinek, "Der jüdische Stamm," Wien, 1869, p. 16.

bear fruit, to him who scatters the seed with full hand, is due the harvest, which we gather. If we should sum up the data of the history of culture, we shall find those were the helpers toward progress who suggested rather than accomplished. For, in the duties, interests, and circumstances of mankind, no one is endowed adequately, so that he could create the perfect. With respect to secular as well as religious literature, it were well to consider that both are distinguished by this feature of suggestiveness, the one more, the other less. The merit in them, on the whole, is the degree of promise. True, the sacred library, then, becomes larger; the "Principia" of Newton and the "First Principles" of Herbert Spencer are part of it. So much the better. Our time is rife with suggestiveness. Attainments of to-day are provisional. As in the industrial, so in the religious world. The patent issued to-day is likely to be made valueless. All our grand machinery may turn out to be antiquated, through the inventive energies, which never rest. So in the mental activities, we must content ourselves with doing no more than hinting at the new thought. Those that will be after us will see things better, and there shall rise from amongst them a better spokesman in behalf of the better to be striven after, and he, in his turn, will leave the work of

regeneration, to his successor, to do it more efficiently and with better insight. Laplace cries Eureka! as he peers into the sky and sees the myriads of stars coördinate their silent, eternal movements according to his calculations, and leaves the science to his heirs to make the best of it. The history of progress traces the incentives and the origin of all improving and culturing efforts through a succession of genial hints.

This is the main content of the world's bibles. So long as they are auspices of the destinies of mankind, and the teachings of them are still ideals and hopes, they are sacred. As soon, however, as they merely mark milestones in the history of culture, relating what is acquired and realized, their worth—that is, their power for edification, reënforcing the energies of men and giving import to their work—is lost to them as in proportion their usefulness is lost.

This is the measure which should be put on biblical literature. The important question to be decided is: Does this bible or that bible teach doctrines which at this stage of our history are confirmed or contradicted by the present state of knowledge and are these doctrines no longer or still valid? Not the antiquity of the Bible, but the juvenility of its spirit, is telling. How the better is to

come, and how men will have and will be the better—that is the doctrine with respect to which a bible must make declaration. For this there obtains an undiminishing sanctity. Reducing the sentiment of veneration to its elements, we find it to consist of admiration of the better and the wiser, and of attachment to the more promising,—an attitude of respectful expectancy.

In so far as the Bible renders the status of public disposition and is the mirror of popular mind and of popular morality, we may say it is a faithful record, and it must be respected for that. But respect for it ought not to be limited to this. The narrative of past experiences is venerable; it is valuable only when the light of other aspects is thrown upon it. There are supplementary data which must be taken into consideration. The ethnology and the archæology of the people, the industrial, political facts concerning them must be fixed before an estimate can be formed of that people and of the intrinsic worth of their writings. Literature is the word-mirror of the national spirit, but the national spirit is the product of many confluent causes.

The Jewish Bible is such a mirror of the Jewish nation. It is, like every national literature, inspirited with the genius of the nation, and depicts it. In this lies no distinctive

merit that would mark the Jewish Bible off from the others. But in the special instance, not of national but of individual genius, in which ambitious ideas are thrown out by powerful minds, which even now are a vast hope and an expectation,—in this the Jewish Bible is exceptional in the class of sacred literature. The Jewish Bible presents God not as a dramatic person, of superlative passions and fancies, and of royal conduct, patterned anthropomorphically. Even in the sense of being a book of popular religion, it is of high character. The Jewish people are reflected in the history of Judaism. Within Judaism the concept God has had modifications. The distinctively Jewish conception of God is that He is recognizable most illustriously in *history*. The Jewish God is identical with Providence. And in the characterization of religion by the prophets, God is ceaselessly provident. Religious conduct is striving to do the will of God. Judaism teaches that morality is the temper in which we feel ourselves to be identified with the universal purpose which we know is beneficent. Judaism recognizes that the best rendering of the thought that God is, lies in the words that He is Providence. The best conduct is that which is at union with the conduct of God as it is manifest in the world.

Hence just as the writing of a history of Ju-

daism involves the bringing into every chapter of it universal history, so the Jew himself feels it to be his duty as a Jew to be cosmopolitan, and to see at all times the finger of God directing. The Jew hails as a contribution to life every thing that comes from the wheel of providential fortune, and every contribution is helpful to the working out of life, if not of the individual, at any rate of mankind.

The history of the Jews will bear this out. This contemplation and deification of Providence, which will be readily seen is different from fatalism, peeps out continuously in the career of the Jews. And here is the grand distinction of Jewish prophets and thinkers. In Moses, Maimonides, and Mendelssohn, the same thought and the same ideal is central. However much they depart from each other in the incidental features of religious philosophy and ritual practice (these being allied with diversity of age), the same spiritual breath is vital in all three.[1] The Biblical and the modern Jews are children of the same spirit; and as to the ancient Bible, the Jew thinks, when the spirit of it will be permitted to walk in the

[1] Exodus, XXXIII., 13 ff.; "More Nebuchim," III., 17 and 51, Engl. translation vol. III., pp. 74 and 288; Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem*, "Gesammelte Schriften," Band III., p. 348; and more at length, "Sache Gottes oder die gerettete Vorsehung," in "Ges. Schr.," Bd. II., p. 413 ff.

light of day without peril of obscuration by bigotry, and will have secured respect, it will wed the spirit of the future, as the bright stars sometimes kiss each other and grow into one; then the Bible will be closed.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STANDARD OF MORALITY.

The question was asked in one of the schools in Babylon[1]: "What is the position of the Law toward the sinner?" His penalty is, was the answer, he shall bring a sacrifice, and that will procure him remission of his sin. "What is the position of the prophets towards sin?" The soul that sinneth, that shall die. "What is the teaching of natural religion?" Confession of the sin before God and repentance of it bring forgiveness. But Rabbi Jose added: "Man is judged every day of his life"; yea, declared Rabbi Nathan, every hour!

This quotation gives us a history of Jewish ethics. The only feature about it to be regretted is that it is in negative form. But it gives us concisely the various stages of conception which obtained successively in Judaism. From the biblical sacrificial cult to the period of rationalism at the close of the Talmud the position of Judaism as to moral responsibility is clearly stated. At the time of the priesthood moral derelictions in-

[1] "Rosh Hashono," 16, a.

volved no more than material consequences, the yielding up of some desirable property. God was party to a compact with man, and man, having infringed upon it, was in duty bound to make restitution. Or, God must be propitiated, and so the sacrificial present was sent upward to conciliate. And the prophetic declaration: "The soul that sinneth, that shall die," finding its best type in Ezekiel, Ch. XVIII., is a considerable advance. Henceforth sin is not to be atoned for by the death of animals, but by visitation upon the person sinning. There shall be no placating God by gifts, but reparation shall be exacted from the man himself. Beyond this, as an appreciable progress, is that view of morality which embraces not only the act and its consequences, and fixes the responsibility upon the author, but also the play of motives in the act, and weighs them in the balance of a refined conscience. This leads us to an important phase in the history of morals. Justice is coming to be noticed as having also a share in the recompense for good and evil. The Jew was continually conscious of the Almighty in the high heavens writing into his book of life. As to justice, it sometimes was hard to believe that such an unfailing and irreproachable God presided over the universe, but the notion obtained, and was valid, until it yielded to the conception of Providence—Providence that judges,

every hour! She holds all, and weighs all, and judges all. She is the divine wisdom—and even justice is only subject to her. You see the gradation. But, as I say, it is preferable to deal with positive data in matters of ethics, and this quotation of ours, however concise a digest it be of the historical succession, does not suffice for a good definition of ethics itself.

This is a fault which ethical declarations generally have, that laws of conduct are negative, for ethics is the practice of religion, and since perforce it must meddle in the doings of men or else it forfeits its worth and sinks into theory and speculation, unrelated to the vital interests of men's lives, it must assert itself in the first best way. I do not say that such negative statements of a moral tendency as: "What does not please thee, do not to thy neighbor,"[1] are not lofty and are not apt to conduce to restraints worthy and commendable. But it is saying nothing deprecatory of the maxim, when we advert to the fact that so long as we rest content with merely restraining, we have not yet done any thing to induce the highest moral motives. One, who must be helped along with warnings and admonitions,

[1] "Sabbath," 31, b., *cf.* Matthew vii., 12. Kant, "Grundlegung sur Metaphysik der Sitten," p. 68, has shown that in the light of the categoric imperative this is not valid, as a [illegible] regulation.

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is not yet entirely to be trusted; but the object of religion and the merit of a man is that he can be relied on to do the right and not to swerve from it. Otherwise he is not yet morally matured and, speaking with reference to the science of ethics, not yet responsible.

But it is agreed that it is just a condition of moral worth that in the determination of actions and in the choice of lines of conduct, the independent reason and the individuality of the man are involved. We designate a certain purpose or a certain deed as good or as bad, and award merit or demerit with respect, not so much to the act itself, as to the source whence it was suggested. In fact, we recognize nothing as indicative of maturing in a child, as when we notice that he is growing gradually out of control, and prefers resting upon his own subjectivity. The difference between youth and manhood is the marked transition from the first condition, in which the circumscription of soul-life was within that of the parents, into another condition, in which the interests of the growing man become detached more and more from the identification with those of the parents, and gravitate into limits of their own, which he henceforth superintends and guards himself. We regard the hortatory character of moral precepts in the same way. They are preparatory and valid provisionally,

the end being the complete emancipation and self-assertion of the man. So that if there shall be mention of sin, it shall be in the sense of such dereliction or criminality as can be traced directly, disregarding complicity of others and surely vicarious extenuation, to the passions of the man, which he, despite the dictates of reason and with perverted will, refused to curb and constrain into the service of the good.[1] Thus let men's lives be judged. By their virtues and vices proclaiming whether they are masters, not only to interfere, but to command.

We hold to this thought of ethics, and estimate the status of self-conscious and self-determining morality as the only legitimate and healthful instance of conduct. We mean to imply, to be sure, nothing derogatory to many estimable careers that are ordered otherwise. They are worthy as far as they go, and are set into scene within their circumstances, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Laying the measure of absolute ethics on the doings of man, the resultant disproportion in which the individual cases come to be seen is in no way meant as a disparagement. We are expected to lead an

[1] "Sukka," 52, b. "By as much as a man's vices are more stringent than another man's, by so much he evinces himself as greater, manifesting by the subduing of them a regnant individuality." So also: "There will be no evil disposition (*i. e.*, passions) in the days to come."

ideal moral life no more than it is possible to lead an ideal industrial life. We fall grievously short of attaining that desirable prosperity for which in the abstract opportunities are offered, but in reality never entirely turned to our benefit. But we can pass judgment on the system of morality of the various religions, each of which claims to inculcate a morality sufficient for and applicable to the needs of life.[1]

What shall we say concerning the relation of morality and religion? According to received notions the two are not as intimately connected as we might suppose. In fact, religion being generally conceived as a theory concerning God and all deductions from that theory, it is not always made plain that these have any bearing on the laws of conduct. On the contrary, in the case of primitive religion, and we can safely say also in the case of the polytheism of the Greeks and Romans, it would not be just to them to identify their religion with their morals. For the latter was infinitely higher, and in every detail a contradiction of their theology. Zeus, the passionate, cannot pose, and was not intended by the Greeks themselves to be understood, as the type after which the devotees were to pattern their con-

[1] "Sabbath," 93. "We forego the contemplation of transcendant matters, and devote ourselves to the consideration of the affairs of this world."

duct. The notion that the divine was outside of the world, entirely distinct from the world, as the tyrant was apart from the people he ruled, brought in its train the thought that the deities were also above all law, and that they evinced their exalted power by contravening the usual and regular. The divine enjoyed unlimited indulgence. Unrestrained power is in every sense arbitrary, and since the hands of the gods were bound on no side, but were free to execute their majestic will and indulge their passions, there was an unquestioned right vested in them to do their pleasure. And so it came to pass that among a highly cultured people like the Greeks, having a well organized social status, with laws and enactments that turned upon delicate points of right and duty, with a refined public spirit and reverence, a popular religion obtained, which was diametrically hostile in spirit to the perpetuation of all this. A proof for the fact that religion and morality were thought to be essentially distinct.

But we have outgrown both this and also the perversion of the Middle Ages. The once current diatribe, "Do not as I do, but do as I say," has lost its application to any one, except to the notoriously perverse. We have learned to know better about morals.

Religion is no longer simply a theory, but it is a practice. The question is not: what do

you believe? but: how about your life? With much deference for every wise disquisition about things to build our faith on, we are bold to say that speculations concerning the deity do not solely determine the character of our conduct. The considerations, which were thought to be the all-important condition of the quality of our manhood, have dwindled into their proper size before the growing conviction that the paramount concern of our life is what sort of character we manifest by our deeds and by the manner we bear ourselves in our dealings with our fellow men. We go farther. We are satisfied with the conduct of the man, and are willing to accept him into our religious fraternity, provided his conduct can pass muster. The character is all-decisive; the deed is all-demonstrative. The word, the letter, grows sere with age, the book becomes antiquated, the dogma is touched by the acid of criticism (and a biting, corroding acid it is). But the spirit is ever young and never fades, and can live in perennial, youthful vigor. The work of our hands, let that be firmly established! We care not so much whether the musket the soldier raises to his shoulder have a stain, so long as his shot hit the mark. And we flatter ourselves to believe that he who aims well, having sent home his aim safely, will be able,

when the roll is called, to raise his hand in honor.

But though in this expectation of work and deed, and making the quality of that the criterion, we may be presumptuous, and though we claim immunity from blame, nay, award of merit to all those who, with the capacities of which they are possessed, strive to accomplish the best, still we are profoundly humble. When we think of that ideal purity, of transcendent loftiness of spirit, which, better equipped and greater in soul-strength, has taken hold of the reins of government within, and does not only restrain desires and passions, but more heroically goes out in its spiritual independence to seek virtue and to practise it, then we know our littleness, imperfection, and weakness. Then the little goodness and timorous piety in us dwindle into puerile attempts, and we understand what it means when we say that prophets only move thus in the region of spirituality. So that, while we insist on it that we be received not ungraciously, because we have been independent of tradition and theory, we assert that we have, let us say, striven honestly and seriously to adjust our life and our interest in order that they fit and are in harmony with the communal welfare.

Neither tradition nor theoretic religion has

a right to brand a peaceable life as immoral, just because it was not turned out of their workshop. I will not say that the geniuses of the world have not allowed themselves to be trampled, even by consecrated authority. Since many of them were leaders of religious movements, this might not be clear. But it is demonstrable that in the humble man, who lays no claim to extraordinary gifts, but who plods along the path of his life in the manner in which the weight of his body and the specific gravity of his character permit him, this is the very virtue of his reticent but harmless conduct. He has made choice of the good according to his best information, and persisted in doing it. When we pick out of this unpretentious career these elements, by which the man manifests that he was conscious of being above his condition, and by this means declares it, by an assertion of mastery, how much will there be cause for admiration, when the more endowed, or when the rare minds give display of their power, and throw out their grand soul upon the scene of their life, darkening every thing else, and letting the lustre of their individuality shine.

CHAPTER VIII.

THEORIES OF ETHICS.

Abstractions have no material value; they may be of consequence in the theory of things, but have no immediate bearing, and surely no factitive influence upon the affairs of the day and hour. In morals, however, we are concerned with the aggregation of trifles, which, though they involve no great consequence singly, it is our fair opinion, must be duly regarded. For success is desired, and our reputation is dear to us. We are callous, comparatively, as to how we are classed as regards to our theology; but the reserve of our combativeness is called into requisition, if our integrity is impugned. We draw a line there; beyond that no one may go. This marks off the sanctuary, and we call out to all invaders: This is holy ground!

Of the distinction between theology and our moralness we are aware. It is clear. No one can mistake it. What I believe has only indirect bearing upon what I do. My fervent expectation of salvation, or my conviction that there is none any more to come, but that it

has been spent already, is a matter almost of indifference. For such considerations are not predominantly present in the conflict between interest and conscience. I must decide my course of action. These two aspects of religion diverge. By the one we choose the path to heaven, and in the contemplation of that blissful event of entering heaven, we are preoccupied with sentimental devotion; by the other we hold fast to the conviction that the divine need not be searched for, that the work of life has been portioned out to us by the hand of God. Transcendental religion, such as the faith whose centre of gravity lies in a kingdom of heaven, spurns this earth, and sets the heart of man upon an everlasting dream. The religion of practical ethics asserts that this divinely-wrought earth has not yet been exhausted, nor ever will; that, in fact, man has been set into life upon it, in order that, by the innumerable occasions which the labors and duties offer, he might evince his rationalness and his latent capacities, and by the experiences that come upon him in consequence of earnest, diligent pursuit of his vocation and occupation, discipline himself, and grow good and wise. The history of priestly religion is a successive alteration in the interpretation of man's life as a resignation to the will of God. The history of ethics *per se* repeats, with

growing urgency, the demand of reverence for man. Whatever reformation there was in religion resulted in shifting the dogma that God is unapproachable. But ethics will have no compromise. It is peremptory in the assertion that this earth is as divine as heaven, and that the duties which are to be fulfilled, wherever and whenever they are to be fulfilled, call out our soul, no less than prayer and devotion do.

To give a history of morals, let me say, does not involve, except in a small degree, the history of sectarian religion. For it is a fact that good morals obtain in spite of a bad religion, and bad morals in the face of a good religion. Even nowadays there is an inexplicable toleration of reprehensible characters by ritualism. The incongruity between profession and deed is sometimes painfully noticeable. A conventional connivance at foibles, nay faults, even vices, was and is practised, and there was frequently a popular impression that moral flaws in private affairs are no legitimate obstruction in church. So much were morals and religion divorced from each other. The history of sects is almost similarly distinct from the history of morals.

An unmistakable difference lies in this. In the history of morals there are no leaders, and the epochs of it do not group about great men. It is the history of the people, and deals with

the current of popular mind. There is no autocracy, just as there never was a hierarchy, in morals. The history of morality is democratic. No one man could fix opprobrium upon one kind of an act or merit upon another kind. This was done by the voice of the people, and the frank, undisguised approval or disapproval of the neighbor, of the fellow-citizens, the honor, the toleration, the dishonor of these declared what was right and what was wrong.

Let me, however, not omit to say that conscience had quite a vote in this question of right and wrong, of the moral and the immoral. The common consent was practically decisive, but the silent voice within us, by its power of reproof, is not to be left out of consideration. If any one should suggest here that a religious element then participates in practical morality, we shall have to remind that dogmatist of the fact that conscience is not a matter of theology. Conscience tells us what is righteous, and if conscience were legitimately theological, it must not be impugned. If God has put conscience into man, he put it into him to help him along, and the Zulu is a brother of ours in the faith. Poor, perverted, depraved child of the wilds, how art thou then, and why art thou then helped along so pitiably, by this parody of a

voice of God within thee, to fumble and to stumble amidst barbarities! I rather believe, he would get on better, if God had not given him that conscience at all. It is a misfortune,—this weird whisper lulling him into satisfaction with his beastly practices.

Conscience has a history, and did not come ready-made out of the hand of God. God planted not even the weed into the field in complete outfit of blade and little blossom; he constrains the tender rose to come out of its snug home in the soil, to quiver and to blush in the light and air, till it bloom. God gave the suggestions, and the earth works them out. He made nothing in full panoply at once. He thought and the eternities labor to bring that thought out. So let us not equip man with a full spiritual uniform at his birth. Man was immature, and is ripening very slowly. Conscience is the tardy fruit to come. Conscience, the pure voice and the sovereign dictator of right, is the latest acquisition. To the eventual attainment of it, culture and civilization devote their best results; for conscience is the word of the spirit, of the free spirit, which speaks from the height of its emancipated state. It has nobility only when it is paired with wisdom and goodness. Conscience is not before, conscience comes after, moral habits. The thought I wish to emphasize is, that it is the

inalienable right and office of the people to determine morals. In morals neither priests nor heroes, except they teach by example, have any say. The history of morals has its counterpart in the history of the people. I mean here practical ethics: actual behavior, conduct. To these abstract morality, inculcations of religious principles are related as the principles of music and the scale are related to the innocent song of the child in joyous moments, or to the magnificent soul-inspiring melodies of Beethoven and Mozart. Intuitive judgments as to right are guesses made within our intellectual horizon. Manly determination by conscious decision and knowledge of actual merit requires a broad sweep of wisdom and refinement. This process of moral improvement can be helped along, but essentially the fate of it depends upon ourselves.

There is no chance for arbitrariness in public opinion. There is an undercurrent of providential wisdom in large movements and in enduring conditions, and there is no more glorious instance of the presence of the divinity on earth than in this moulding of the souls of humanity. The destiny of mankind mankind itself works out, and the spirit of God, ever since creation, is in it. All the concerns on earth, weighed down with profound import, were entrusted to mankind. Who will say that

they are paltry, when the conviction can be brought home to us that every human being on earth is part in it and is made party to it. The humble being is allied with the majesty of Providence; the weak hands of man assisting the divine work.

So it is with the quality of our deeds. There is a responsibility we bear, that goes farther than involving merely our individual welfare. We are responsible to mankind. With respect to the question whether we have taken honorable part in the activity of the human life; whether we have enhanced it by our personal conduct, or degraded it; whether we have deflected our course from that of the universal one, *that* will be judged. The issue will be: How about our life? Belief is impotent; the deed is full of consequences. The dogma is a pretty assertion, but the morals is a prime condition. Individuality is the criterion of the worth of our life, and the voice of the people is the judge of it. Conscience is the highest synthesis of our soul-experiences, and the earth is the only place where the soul gives evidence of its divinity. Forego the dreams of the future; throw yourself with all the energies you possess upon the present. This earth is divine; God is active here, and every day unfolds a divine thought and throws its beauty out before our eyes. We are not, however, to content our-

selves with observing these beauties which God has wrought, but rather set to recognizing that which is in them, viz., wisdom, goodness. We can create, in the form of deeds, motives, sentiments, something, than which nothing is nobler, nothing sublimer to turn out of the workshop of Providence.

Let us not rest in contemplation; let us give up ourselves, so that we in turn be beheld, and so that we offer joy to the beholders. Let us be evidences of the deity. Ours is the sphere of the spirit; in that let us work, not by word, not by dogma, not by profession, but by work. Let us identify ourselves with the thought that was suggested by means of us by the Creator, when he planted the seeds of purity into us. The voice of Conscience, then a whisper, distorted so long, is growing melodious and strong,—a voice of manhood, and of manliness, and of godliness.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROGRESS OF KNOWLEDGE.

What is the position of science toward religion, and in what respects has religion any dealings with science? The question, in this general form, has been the source of much misunderstanding. I say question, for the matter has not got much beyond being a question. An answer is yet a desideratum. We content ourselves with merely broaching the problem. Our aim is to suggest that, beside the positiveness of faith, which devolves on us as a kind of spiritual inheritance, there is taking place an accumulation of experimental wisdom. This secular knowledge, conventionally foreign to religion, is of practical value as the aggregate experience and wisdom of mankind. It is, for the present, sufficient, if we have brought ourselves to appreciate that there is significance in the profane side of the history of mankind. Of what value this is with respect to religion is another question. First it is requisite to know that facts of universal experience, the earnings of ages of thrift, are didactic. But they are more. It is not pastoral cant to say,

a man is accounted, not for what he has, but for what he is. So it is with humanity. The degree of culture is gauged by the intrinsic worth of it. The outer life of mankind, the manifold activities and passivities which constitute its eventful career, like the spokes of the wheel to the axle-tree, are irradiations of a central soul.

There is one feature in the history of mankind which makes it different from the natural history of the world. It does not narrate simply the coming into and the going out of existence, as the history of animal life, or of organic life as a whole. Mankind does more than live and die, and there are more data in its biography than birth and death. In human life there is implied a state of soul. This psychical part marks off the human life from all other organized existences.

This soul-life suffuses the career of man; makes him what he is. The body is the mantle and the sword of the soul for defence, for work. The muscles are in its service; the fibres and the delicate nerves convey its messages to the world. So the entire world is the ample garment of the divine spirit, which, in grace, in beauty, in rhythm, conform to it. Let us carry the analogy further. The history of mankind has a creative and sovereign thought resident within, by the dictates of

which the times of culture and the times of barbarity come. This is the seed from which all the fruit ripens.

Man is typical of Providence. It sometimes seems as if the great and the small of this universe were patterned after one guiding thought. That thought is the divine thought which it were presumptuous to pretend conceiving. But it is allowed to say that every one can see glimpses of it. A central thought and matter rotating about it is the term common to all parts of the universe. From the blade of grass, driven out of the ground by a strange force in the capsular seed, to the organism of the universe, filling the vast space of the eternities,—through all of these a profound thought is realizing itself. Each one is akin to the great world in this. In the universe God works by quantity, in us by considerations of quality. Nature is the symbol of God's thought in the mass; the noble man represents the divine ideal in the finest instance. But the thought of the Creator in man makes him what he is. The idea emanating from the exalted spirit is creative through all time.

Morals and the natural sciences confirm each other. The virtue in a man is a credit to him only in so far as it is evidence that his character has willed it. The moral man is the self-determining man. The world in a similar

manner is revealing the sovereign God. The conduct of matter, the rightness of natural law, the peace in creation, the inscrutable and yet signally noticeable purpose to which atom and individual subserve, the design by which the singly discordant elements are harmonized, —are they not an impressive confirmation of the teaching: The man of love and of understanding is blest! The justness of the pious is like the justice of God; here again there is kinship between man and his Creator.

It will not do to teach morality and make it a separate matter. Long enough has there been the promulgation of ethics on the authority of a man. We want corroboration, proof. Whatever is declared must be established. In such a matter as what is best to do, we will not be satisfied with the dogmatism of one, even though that one be ever so genial. For the collective wisdom is greater than his. Lines of conduct no single person can mark out for mankind. He knows that he is powerless to prescribe to gross matter. For it has a mysterious volition of its own. How can he for the refined soul! Ethics is the universal law enforced in the miniature world of man. One who shall benefit us and direct our energies and thoughts and feelings into the right, and deflect them from the wrong, must have found the universal parallax first, must have an introspection into the mechan-

ism of God's work, understanding the mode of things and of souls by which they severally and unitedly coördinate themselves. He must know more of the divine thought than we do; he must have gone out into the arena of the physical life, and there by patient and prolonged observation and by genial presentiment have learnt the law of right that God executes there. For there He practises His ethics. The teacher of morals for us must know the moral doctrine, as it were, of God. The moralist must be the scientist. This shall be his title to teach us justice, if he shall have seen best the justice of God. He shall draw for us the limits of our rights and of our duties, and their extent, according to the magnificent prototype which God gives. Of course, this demands a high grade of scientific attainment, and in this sense also it becomes obvious that, while some of our ethical principles are worthy and safe guides, we can expect that our ethics will be illumined and purified with every step of progress in knowledge and culture. Civilization is the thermometer by which we can gauge our standards of morality. The soul in us prescribes our conduct according to the degree of its emancipation. The intellect is to be trusted in proportion to its health.[1]

[1] Intellectual perfection and moral perfection belong inseparably together; the one is inconceivable without the other.—Maimonides, Introduction to "More Nebuchim," and "More Nebuchim," I., 34.

It is indulgent to hold a man pious because he does the best he is aware of. But he should know more than he is aware of. It is due from him to achieve progress, and to be as intelligent as is possible for him concerning his place in life. It is almost wrong, by a too finely drawn tolerance, to indulge a man in ignorance. The duty of every man is to advance beyond the condition into which his birth and circumstances have put him. By as much as he strives to improve intellectually, by so much he refines himself morally!

Here we have the recommendation to heed the sciences. They discipline us into better men. They bring us acceptable precepts, because they have gathered them out of the school of the universe. The concepts of morals are then one department of God's law, as the concepts of physics are another department of God's law. Then, as in the realm of matter, God is present at the movement of each atom and at the unfolding of every organism, because by virtue only of the demonstration of the thought, the thinker is manifest, so in the realm of morals, at every instance of right-doing, the personality of a man actually comes to *be*.

We are what we do, and we exist only while we act. We give proof of ourselves by deed, and we proclaim what we are by the quality of

our life. Let us not be moral dreamers, but doers. Let us not be content with sentimental professions, but insist on manly endeavor. The moralness of our deeds throws our dogmatics into the waste-basket. There shall not be one jot of our character but what shall receive its due attention. Let us not, for the sake of idle comfort, fondle ourselves into the illusion that, having done what is prescribed and guarded ourselves against infringing upon the prohibited, we are righteous. According to the conventional judgment, we may be acceptable. But by the dignity of our humanity, we are not ennobled until we have achieved the best. We are destined to attain to a higher individuality. We must not stop. God never ceases producing, and we might, to our benefit, imitate the divine assiduity. It looks almost as if God were Infinite Ambition, creating every moment new beauties which he allows to fade, that He might create new and more glorious beauties. From that noble yearning let us learn. The present is a precious gift, but the future, which Providence hides from us, is more precious. So God, so the world, so the wisdom of mankind, teach the insatiable, eternal ambition after the nobler, the purer, the more divine-like.

The history of art runs parallel with the history of civilization. Knowing what a man

calls beautiful, we know much about him. We can make a guess as to what is his character. Tell us of the favorite arts of a people, and you have at once told us of its life, of its political, its domestic, its religious matters. For on the surface of a man's conduct lies his character, and through the diversified activities of a nation we can trace its ideal.

We need not be told what dogmas a sect teaches, so long as we can see some of its churches. The sombre walls, the melancholy atmosphere, in between the columns, and the dull light, listlessly hovering about the darkened windows, tell the catechism. Lead me elsewhere, where the sun has free scope and the light glows white, and the fresh air is charged with perfume. Does it require a prophetic gift to guess what doctrines obtain amid such cheer? The castles, skirting the borders, look down into the valleys from the tops of well-defended mountains, like so many barons set to lording over abject vassals, emblems of oppression! The hamlets throughout our land, simple and unadorned, tell by their artlessness that the time has come for unpretentious, conscious freedom. The Buddhists burrow into the mountains of granite and hollow out their temple, leaving columns, like reeds, to hold the massive cupola above, and thus unwittingly tell us all we need to know

about them. We try to enter into God, they say thus symbolically, and be swallowed up in the maw of eternal mystery. There is not a spire nor steeple but what is emblematic. The very style in which our city-halls, our houses of legislature, are built, are records of the history of the emancipation of the people and their present republicanism. So the mind, so the heart, so our most earnest concerns, declare themselves. The very stones speak.

All this is involuntary and spontaneous. We can no more prevent this mute revelation of the soul of mankind, than we can close up the chinks in the wall of the sky to keep out the light. The world has its own method, and persists in it. There is not a thought, however much you may keep it secret, but will be known, and a time may come when in the very market-places this thought will be heard. Let it but have enlisted a number of adherents who have grouped their lives around it, and this mental encampment will be visible to the world. They cannot conceal it. Every line of the face will reveal it.

We ought to learn more of this fact—how public we are. Providence is intolerant of masks, tears them off, and brings out the contour of our character into undeceiving relief. This is the art of Providence.[1]

Every period is mirrored. We need not

[1] Compare our remarks on page 63.

delve into abstruse study for that. A matter-of-fact observation of things at hand will do. It will then appear as if out of the centre of the universe a spirit were pushing, radiating outward into every point; as if all things were infused with it. The multitudinous experiences, wants, aspirations, are the folds of that sovereign thought. The world is a statue and there is a soul in it; this soul is swelling the muscles and quickening the blood, and gives a sparkle to the eyes, and presses out the tears, and puts a quiver on the lips. That soul lives in every fibre.

Let us have a broader view of Providence. The world is God's. His thought is at work everywhere; all things reveal it. Let us not speak of religion as if it were nothing but a matter of belief, and solely stern, legal practice. It is belief, it is practice; but it is more. Religion is the greatest of arts. Religion is another word for how much of the beautiful there is in the world we have taken into ourselves and made it our own. I might be persuaded to dogmatize. He who sees elements of beauty everywhere is nearest to God. At any rate he is likely to appreciate best what God has done and is doing in this world. The divine is superlatively beautiful. Whatever charms by the appeals of melody, by the bewitching graces of proportion, be it in the

massive structures of terrestrial things, be it in the delicate mold of face or flower, be it in the sweet inspiration of love, or in the glory of thought, wherever it be, that partakes of divinity and has a claim on our religious life.[1] Art and the culture of art are parts of religious duty. We must promote our talents in the direction of the beautiful, that thus we might by refinement of ourselves come to be more in sympathy with that eternally perfecting work of art which God has set upon the canvas of finite existence.

The first help in pious devotion was the art of dancing. The future shall see a religion in which not the gross and sensual delectation, but all the arts, the delicious, spiritual aptitudes of our being, shall make for us an harmonious spirituality. They will be a source of beatitude, and shall be creative for us of a rounded and peaceful and unified life.

[1] Maimonides ("More Nebuchim," II., 4) speaks of æsthetico-somatic acts, which he terms as equivalent to acts of creation.

CHAPTER X.

THE HISTORY OF JUDAISM.

The distinctive feature which marks off the history of Judaism from the history of any other religion, leaving out of view consideration of the intrinsic character, is that it needs universal history to make a proper presentation of it possible. The aid of universal history is necessary as a complement to round off the chapters of Jewish experience. It offers also an explanation of the contents of Jewish mental life. Without it the peculiarly religious habit of the Jewish people would lose significance. The Jewish people, from the time that their national solidarity was disintegrated, have had dealings with the world at large. Since the Diaspora their experiences are a continuous cycle of passivity. With the disruption of the Jewish commonwealth and with the departure from Palestine, the thread of Jewish history began to seize hold of relation to many individual histories. Though in some countries the infusion by them had not effected much, the retroaction upon the Jews themselves of the new circumstances, which

conditioned their industrial and mental activities and their religious practices, was in an important degree appreciable.

It is easy to understand that the exile and the dispersion were events which the Jews in the course of years came to estimate in a melancholy manner. By the gradually more saddening conditions of life they were led to feel that while their comfort rested solely in contemplation and soul-sanctification, the prosperity of their households and the success in their occupations were exasperatingly growing into dependence upon the nations and the arbitrary boon or withdrawal of tolerance by those into whose hands their fate had thrown them. Politically the history of the Jews during the Talmudic, Gaonic, and Rabbinic period is to a large degree determined by the chapters of contemporaneous history of Asia, Africa, and Europe. I need not cite instances. From the first kings of the Goths, who as Grätz[1] has it, "enacted the first act of that frightful drama, which finds its climax in the terrible decrees of Ferdinand and of Manuel of Portugal," until this century, the life of the Jews is a struggle such as records of history at large have no duplicate of. It is a phenomenon by itself.

[1] "Die westgothische Gesetzgebung in Betreff der Juden" (Jahresbericht d. jüd. theolog. Seminars), Breslau, 1858, p. 2.

We have no mention to make here of the exceptional fortitude with which the Jews bore oppressions. Nor is it our intention to say one word of praise for the steadfastness in faith nor for the loyal persistence in the course of law-abiding peacefulness. Knowing the great provocation, it is both affecting and a testimony to religious heroism, whose lustre will not tarnish. I have in view the fact that to round off the external aspect of Judaism, we are constrained to keep in view universal history. We find in this fact an instance of that staunch morality, of which we spoke before. We find, finally, in this an exemplification of a moral habit of life. The Jewish people were not ascetic in their reticence and seclusion, not sentimentally passive, because of a pious withdrawal from contact with the world, but aggressively and defensively committed to active participation in the duties and task of the passing hours. I wish here, by way of parenthesis, to remark that I am speaking of the Jewish people mainly as a religious community, from which, for the purposes in hand, I divorce its racial feature. When I refer to the history of the Jewish people I mean that significance attaches to that history only in so far as it is the mirror of the Jewish religion and of the Jewish conception of morality. Of the consideration concerning the superior vitality of

this race among more powerful races, despite the malevolence and repression on the part of the domineering nations, and the disparity of numbers ; of a strange and perplexing calmness and unwavering spirit of solidarity in that persecuted little tribe ; of this special, ethnological matter, except in so far as it is indicative of moral strength, I do not wish to speak here.

We must content ourselves with merely asserting that the cause of this racial healthfulness were solid faith and solid ethics. These had inured themselves into the Jewish people, and had turned organic. Religion, having become constitutional, proved a source of vigor, upon which it was safe to draw for resources in troublesome and trying times. And I refer to that constituent of history, which in the form of persecution, plied restlessly against this stronghold, if not with the purpose of breaking it down, at least to vent its spleen and to have gratification in the aggressive and destructive effort against it.

The waves roll and heave and swell in the open sea ; they pursue their wild sport, coming in with the tide ; but I have noticed them often, as they come near to the shore, they slacken, and while tossing their white manes, and throwing themselves down in a shower of spluttering foam, they seem all at once to feel they are approaching the unmoved rock, and at

its feet they grow quiet and smoothen out into calm undulations. I felt tempted to carry out the analogy, and I thought in the presence of the royal conduct of a pious people, steadfastly loyal to their faith,—passions and bigotry would abate. But the events teach a different lesson. The analogy between matter and spirit does not hold. The unemancipated, fatalistic conduct of nature has a way for peacefulness, to which the spirit cannot easily attain, despite its transcendent nobility.

Providence seems to have a twofold kind of government. The realms of the material and of the spiritual are distinct. But, in reality, be it here remarked, the two, if we follow them to their ultimates, flow into each other. If we distinguish them as separate agents, executing the design of Providence, in the form of culture, and of physical development, with a twofold source, and continually interacting, we shall at some periods in the history of the world find conflicts, which to our circumscribed vision appear hindering and harmful. To speak less abstrusely, let me say that history is complicated and it is not always possible for us to see the drift of it. History is, properly, not merely a narrative of personal and of national events, but embraces the entire range of terrestrial action. I wish to say concerning this all-encompassing experience of humanity,

that, while we are confident it is tending toward an aim, which it is bound to attain, and for which we most frequently have guaranty, yet sometimes we lack sufficient discretion to reconcile us to occurrences which seem foreign, nay, hostile, to the providential plan.

In the special case I have now in hand, the hostility to Judaism, endless apparently as it undoubtedly must have appeared to the poor, down-trodden Jew of the Middle Ages, coupled with the uselessness of this hostility, and its failure to move the Jew one jot from his conviction and practice, seem, at least, a vain expenditure of energy. And the philosopher of history, who sees in the phenomena of history unmistakable evidence of spiritual dynamics, approaches this chapter of Jewish history with much hesitation. For here, presumably from their inception, the Jewish people, endowed with exceptional tenacity, provoke antagonism. But there is no appreciable return for the prolonged outlay of moral energy. The contest between Judaism and the world results in a splintering strength, and accomplishes nothing. No material benefit accrues to the Jewish people from their fortitude and their noble sentimentality, nor to the nations of Asia and of Europe for the assertion of authority over them, and for the indulgence of passion against them.

The remarkable fidelity of the Jews to Judaism has redounded certainly, in a certain degree, to the greater illumination of both Jews and non-Jews. But Providence does not spend her energies upon the paltry business of awarding praise. She desires tangible acquisitions and a material furtherance of the cause of truth and the dissemination of it. This shall conduce ultimately to the transformation of the knowledge of truth into the faculty for the doing of it by men. Now, the question is, in what respect has Judaism itself grown better by reason of its struggles, and to what purpose for the aggregate interests of mankind has Providence subjected the people of Israel to buffets and hardships?

In one way we can see a justification of the eventful career of the Jews, because, though it induced the venom of bigoted oppression, it had eventually disciplinary value for the nations of Europe. But what justification of it can we cite, looking at this from the Jewish side? The time is now proper to ask this question. We are far enough removed from the scene to presume to behold it in a *tout ensemble*. We ask: What was the benefit to Judaism in all this? It cannot be that the handful of Jews alone were regarded. That could have been done with less melancholy means and with smaller outlay. Nor is it

clear, it must be admitted, that the regeneration of the Jews was not as illustrious as the unusual expenditure of effort would justify one to expect. Besides, large events and a prolonged tendency in events, we can safely say, deal not with individuals, nor with communities, but with causes and purposes which transcend single and local interests. Jewish history, embracing the whole vista almost of the history of mankind, must bear a large significance and explain a sweeping truth.

The kernel of Jewish history is Judaism. This is admitted. Whatever prominence the Jewish people has enjoyed (and that prominence is growing to-day) attaches to it solely because of the religious idea, of which it is the exponent. The history of the Jewish people proves that it has significance because of its religion. Says Dr. Wise: "If you ask me why the Jews are forever the target of the petulant and barbarous assassins of human happiness, I must answer with the question, why is genius, why are the representatives of genius, the target of the same assassins? The Jew is the representative of eternal and the loftiest genius. Are we not a century in advance of the world in our religious conceptions, in our charitable practices and in our fraternal oneness? . . . Are we not the perpetual protestation against the world's superstitions and atheism? Are we

not the loudest voice crying in the wilderness for toleration, humanity, and the unity of mankind on the moral and intellectual basis?" [1] It will then not be presumptuous to say that the religious idea was the centre of the history of the Jews. Only in this sense the mission of the Jews can be understood. The Jews must give way to Judaism.[2]

Now we ask further, seeing that Judaism is the paramount concern, and the Jews, as it were, merely the incidentalness of it, in what respect did its history accrue beneficially to Judaism? This brings us to the head of our problem and suggests superficially as an answer, an alternative. We must determine what is the value of experience in matters of religion. But we must ascertain and determine whether religious teachings need experience at all to corroborate them. It may be that we are desirous to obtain for our religious conception such a degree of positiveness that it should be as compelling

[1] "Genius in History and History of Genius", *American Israelite*, March 17, 1882.

[2] Dr. Ludwig Philippson says: "Not to Judaism, as it has been until now, will mankind finally attain, but to the religious idea, as it has been carried along by Judaism unchanged through all its phases, and partially brought to the world by Christianity and Mohammedanism." And: "He is a Jew, who acknowledges the one, eternal God, not as a Jew *in specie*, but as devotee of the religious idea, which is contained in Judaism." ("Die Entwickelung der religiösen Idee," Leipzig, 1874, p. 179.)

as an axiom. Of course that would be an exalted and as yet an uncommon quality of religion. But it is certainly desirable that to have an implicit conviction in the principles of Judaism they should have applicative certainty. Toward such a conception of Judaism experience stands in the same manner as toward all intuitions. They are true and were considered to be true, and experimental help does not in an essential way enhance their validity. It did not require an exceptional method to bring home the fact that the multiplication table can be relied on. The rationalist knows that such truths come spontaneously and are transfused with the blood, and are gotten possession of and transmitted in an organic way.

All this points one way. Jewish history is an experiment, as the life of each and every one is an experiment, that is, a trial of what his theory of life is worth.[1] There is thus

[1] This larger meaning of individual lives and of their diversity is admirably defended by John Stuart Mill: "As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments of living. . . . Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredients of individual and social progress" ("On Liberty," People's Edition, London, p. 33). I add that, not only should this individualization be furthered by govermental aid, but that, such is the benefit which accrues to mankind from these multifari-

in this world an enactment of myriads of such trials of theories. The private life is never so private, but what the content of it becomes eventually public property. Providence generously leaves the trivialities to us and respects our little secrets. But our character, which unifies these trivialities and systematizes our career, is very important. For that is one of the delicate experiments Providence made in the laboratory of the spirit. Some of these are worthless, and she rejects them. Some of them, very promising at the start, she has the grief to see fail and end in disaster. Over these she weeps. But some are precious to her. For they boil or cool at the proper temperature,—expand and contract, liquefy and grow solid, under given conditions, Over these she rejoices. Now, contemplating the history of the Jewish people, its varying fortunes, its sorrows, its joys, its degradation and its glory, is it not an experiment, an experiment in religion? Jewish history is a test of the Jewish religion, and the practice shows the worth of the theory of Judaism.

Let us claim for Jewish history no miraculous intervention.[1] I am willing to put it on

ous experiments, that the complexity of human society, in economics and in religion, is explicable mainly on the lines of this thought.

[1] "In this grand demolition of mythical religion, the noise

par with universal history. The survival of the Jewish people is no wonder, but the natural consequence of the *moral* life of the Jews. The fidelity of the Jew to his faith, and his fortitude are natural complements of clear religiousness. The genial gifts of Jewish minds, and the mobility of his sentiments, like the fine sand thrown on the plate, that shivers and dances at the touch of the bow, are states of a soul which has the conviction of the blood-relationship between man and man, and of the kinship of man and the entire universe. This is the reason why Jewish history is universal, because the Jewish faith teaches the brotherhood of all men in their various walks of life, and a theory of living which so far has stood the test best.

of which fills our age, Judaism, such as the centuries have made it, is the religion which has had the least to suffer and the least to fear, for its miracles and practices constitute no integral and essential part, so that, consequently, it does not crumble with them." J. Darmsteter, "Die Philosophie der Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes," deutsch von J. Singer, Wien, 1884, p. 37. Engl. trans. in *Hebrew Review*, vol. II., 1881–82, p. 76.

CHAPTER XI.

FOREIGN ELEMENTS IN JUDAISM.

An important chapter in the history of foreign influence upon Judaism is the period immediately after the origin of Christianity. It seemed as if the Jewish population in Palestine was disintegrating into many sects, the like of which had never been before among the Jewish people. It was a time of intoxication, in the midst of great mental activity. Metaphysical doctrines, concealed beneath a mass of mysticism, grew into a system of dogmatics, which fairly throttled the rational spirit of Judaism. Weird and most unwarrantable speculations acquired unusual potency and power. For a time it seemed as if the last few years of Rabbinic influence would be splintered in useless apologetics. There was serious work to be done before the land was to be abandoned, and before the props were to be knocked off forever from beneath the tottering and sapless hierarchy. There was peremptory need for provision against the bad times coming. But there was no possibility of a unified effort.

It is a phenomenon in the history of mind that mysticism has a fatal habit of obtruding itself upon the scene of legitimate thought just then, when most hope obtains in rationalism, and when the acquisition of clear principles is just about bearing fruit. So also now, the Rabbis had just begun teaching a conception of Judaism freed from the legalism of Moses and from its hierarchical character. But their much promising rationalism was checked by the appearance of Gnostic sects.

This is not the place to explain the presence of Gnosticism at this time. This would lead to a consideration of the origin of Christianity, in which it might become evident that Gnosticism is a part only of the intellectual effort which characterizes the entire period. The origin of Christianity is traceable to asceticism, which obtained not only in Palestine, but through a stretch of Asiatic provinces, even in Iran and the peninsula of India.

We have to deal here mainly with the fact that there were Gnostic sects in Palestine, and that these imported certain teachings and views into Judaism. Although they did not exert a lasting influence upon traditional or Rabbinic Judaism, they have at any rate left noticeable traces of a struggle between them and the teaching of the Talmud.

How they succeeded in gaining adherents

amongst the Jews still admits of some explanation. Gnosticism is mainly a sentimentality, such as perhaps in the main all theosophies are. Properly speaking, Gnosticism is the knowledge, the Gnosis, and considering its source, it is a Greek importation. It is a pretension to a metaphysical speculation concerning God and the origin of light, in which the Deity resides. Apparently then it is a philosophy.[1] But there is coupled with this abstract study a certain exaltation, and this takes it at once out of the class of mental effort, and puts it amongst the other kindred ecstasies, forfeiting along with its rationalism also its title to being a legitimate science.

Gnosticism is avowedly the vitiation of Hellenistic philosophy, and it is analogous to theosophic movements that are traceable to Asiatic, or to speak more exactly, to Hindu and to Buddhistic schools of religious thought. Mysticism is congenite, and though there are different sources for it, in the end these produce the same typical Gnostic and

[1] On p. 3, note 2, we cited the Talmudic statement that the aboriginal man was a "*Min*." Grätz thinks, *Min* means a Gnostic. Whether such high antiquity can be claimed for Gnosticism is still a question. We presume that the Talmud means simply to say that man has a natural liking for the mysterious. See, however, A. H. Goldfahn in "Ueber den Ursprung u. d. Bedeutung des Ausdruckes 'Min,'" Frankel's, "Monatsschrift," Jahrg. 1870, pp. 163–177.

mystic sublimation above the inscrutable finalities, which hamper our philosophy and religion. It is a phenomenon, common to all the chapters of rationalism, that the natural restrictions to our rationalism are set at some time popularly at naught by a certain iconoclasm of our impulsive and impatient intellectual craving. This bold disregard brings the exalted sentiments into regions in which logic and the trusted guides of reason are impotent and the mind is free to wander without being held to account. The time of Jesus is especially fruitful of such ecstatic effort. Not only the much decried Simon Magus, not merely John the Baptist, the brooding Essene, but even Jesus himself is suspected. His occasional mysterious declarations, *e.g.* concerning his intimate relations to his Father, and his images of a future existence, seem not to conceal entirely an inclination towards Gnosticism.[1] Not to speak of the Christian sects of the Nazarites and Ebionites, we can go farther into Asia to discover analogous theosophic movements. We refer merely cursorily to the Alexandrian school of Neoplatonism, which is a mixture of Greek idealism, of Haggadic literalism, and of Gnostic imagery. Persian dualism, also, while dealing with the ultimate causes of good and evil, and holding

[1] Grätz, "Gnosticismus und Judenthum," page 3.

them to be real entities, is still a kind of Gnosticism. We shall find this to be more justified than would at first seem warrantable.

But the threads of mystic influence can be pursued farther, and we shall not go amiss if from Semitic Judaism we go in our investigation to Aryan Buddhism, for there has been more of miscegenation in religion than is apparent. In the history of religion there has been crossing of species, and the mongrel breed has, in the course of time, so assimilated itself to the stronger of its parents, that identification of the foreign co-parents is not easy. The assertion that an influence was exerted by Buddhistic esoterism upon the early Jewish Christian Church is not easily disposed of. As was said above, our business at hand is not to offer a theory of the origin of Christianity. We merely wish to be allowed to believe that in the Gnostic movement of that time elements are recognizable which we are bound to call Buddhistic. We do not intend to maintain that these elements which we term Buddhistic were, as a matter of fact, imported bodily from the Hindu sects either by Pundits who might have come to Jerusalem, or by Jewish travellers, who, on returning from their extensive and enterprising journeys in the East, brought reports of such teachings into the Talmudic schools. Such a statement would be extravagant and

would require corroboration.[1] But it is one thing to refuse believing actual contact between India and Palestine, and another to say that a similar tone of melancholy and hopelessness, whether in India or in Palestine, produced a similar mental deterioration. An analogous morbidity, depressing the minds of Buddhists and of Jews, was conducive to a sentimentality, which, in theological matters became mysticism, and in the department of metaphysics turned into Gnosticism. That is all I wish to claim here. The historical allusions I will be permitted to forego. It is evident that in India provocations for melancholy were apt to obtain. Is not, in fact, the Buddhistic faith ascetic and austere? It is permeated with a spirit of abstinence, finding contentment in the practice of mortification and of transcendent self-conquest. Palestinian Gnosticism, though appearing only occasionally on Jewish ground and foreign to Jewish habits, can still be con-

[1] *Cf.*, however, Dr. D. Oppenheim, in Frankel, "Monatsschrift für Gesch. u. Wissenschaft des Judenthums," 1864, "Über den frühzeitigen Gebrauch der indischen Ziffern bei den Juden," pp. 231 ff, pp. 462 ff; 1865, pp. 254 ff, pp. 376 ff. Also Dr. S. Back, in "Ben Chananjah," I., 1858; "Inder und Hebräer," pp. 257 ff, 354 ff, 400 ff, 442 ff, 494 ff. Dr. J. Perles, "Rabbinische Agada's in 1001 Nacht"; in Frankel "Monatsschrift" Jahrg. 1873; Dr. S. Back, "Die Fabel in Talmud u. Midrasch," in Jahrg. 1875, 76, 80, 81, 83, 84, and Dr. M. Gaster, "Beiträge zur vergleichenden Sagen- und Märchenkunde," Jahrg. 1880, '81.

sidered, like the Buddhistic, a natural consequence of similar circumstances, which called forth a strain of sadness and of mysticism. The distressing conditions because of which the pious Jews risked their lives and submitted to torture, constrained them to seek for hope and encouragement within themselves. That there is a touch of foreign influence in the post-biblical phase of Judaism will be more evident upon a better acquaintance with the sources.[1] The very name of one of the most prominent sects of the Gnostics, the Ophites or Naasites, offers a significant hint. The

[1] For instances of Persian influence in the origin of the Essenes, *vid.* Hilgenfeld in his "Zeitschrift," 1867, p. 97 *seqq.*, where he seeks to prove that not only Parseeism but also Buddhism have exercised material influence upon the formation of the sect, *vid. l. c.*, 1868, p. 343, *seqq.*, and 1871, p. 50 *seqq.* In his later publications Hilgenfeld admits only Persian influence, "Zeitschrift," Jahrg. 1882, p. 299; "Ketzergeschichte des Urchristenthums," pp. 141–149. Even Lightfoot adopts secondary Parsee influence, but with virtual Jewish foundation.—"St. Paul's Epistles" (2d ed.) pp. 355–396. Herzfeld explains Esseneism, as a "Judaism of quite peculiarly blended ultra-Pharisaic and Alexandrinian views in alliance with Pythagorianism, and with many rites of Egyptian priests."—"Geschichte des Volkes Israel," Bd. III., p. 369. That Jews were familiar with Eastern empires and with Egypt, *vid.* M. M. Kalisch "Comm. to Leviticus," II., p. 345. A group of proverbs was transfused into the Hitopadesa. Grätz, "Geschichte den Judn," I., p. 348, *vid.* Frankel, "Monatsshrift," Jahrg. 1875, p. 540 ff. Compare Jahrg. 1867, p. 318. See further p. 172–175.

name is derived from *Nachash*, and was given the sect mainly because the serpent played an important rôle amongst them. They ascribed great veneration to the serpent. It is well-known that the serpent is employed in the Pentateuch as the originator of sin. It was, according to the view of very primitive tribes, the prototype of evil and the disguise of the devil. The Ophites ascribed great credit to the serpent for having seduced the first pair to disobedience against God. For through this disobedience discretion was awakened in the reasoning of man to the everlasting contest between the spirits of good and evil.

Now the serpent worship is no mean phenomenon in the history of religions, and is not confined to this one mystic sect. As Goldziher has it, the serpent worship is a residual quantity of a former mythological aspect of nature. It is more especially a reminiscence of nomadic life, but in later forms of religion the serpent is detached from mythology.[1] Aside of the period of solar significance, the serpent appears so often that he must be classified not according to ethnological, but according to historical stages of civilization.[2] We shall find later on

[1] "Mythology among the Hebrews," London, 1877, p. 225.

[2] Max Müller, "Origin and Growth of Religion," New York, 1879, p. 94 and p. 112; Lubbock, "Origin of Cilvilization," p. 264 ff.

this symbol of the serpent to be more instructive. Here it will suffice to refer to serpent worship solely in connection with the Gnostic sect of the Ophites,[1] to corroborate merely the allusion we make of a probable importation from the far East. For nowhere has the application of the serpent-symbol found a larger field than there; and it is a notorious fact that the serpent and staff of Hermes is a Greek variation of the Yoni and Linga prototype of India.[2]

Our problem is to pursue the influences exerted by dualistic and trinitarian systems upon the monotheistic faith of the Jews, and we are speaking of Gnosticism only in so far as it is part of this problem. Having seen that there is in the origin of Gnosticism an element akin to the dualism of the Persians and to the henotheism of the Hindus, we should suppose

[1] Jellinek ("Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala," Erstes Heft., Leipzig, 1852, p. 46) says the Ophitic sect is of Jewish origin. The Leviathan and the Bahamoth are typical. The "eating of the Leviathan," which is promised the righteous, means the eventual cessation of sin, which will be swallowed up by righteousness.

[2] The "Buendehesh," chapter 31, says: "Ahura will descend to the earth, and himself will offer the sacrifices. Ahriman and the serpent will be beaten by the strength of his songs and praise, and become helpless and weak. From that heavenly bridge to which he will run he will fall into the deepest night. The serpent, corrupt in seed, will perish in the boiling metal." *Cf.* G. W. Cox, "Mythology of the Aryan Races," p. 363.

that, if it did find acceptance on the part of muddled minds, it must have been shunned by protagonists in religious philosophy such as Philo and the Jewish Alexandrinian school were. Before them we have no serious attempt at systematic treatment of Judaism. With Philo a new era begins in Jewish thought, which, if it did not bring about a change in Judaism itself, at any rate was influential enough to alter the position of Judaism toward the new religion. Now there was every reason for Philo to avoid Gnostic elements; for these were precarious for a dogmatizing Platonist. And still Philo is the very one to whom the creation of Jewish Gnosticism must be ascribed. Aside from the immediate serious consequences, which arose from this unexpected attitude of Philo another unpleasant circumstance attaches to it, viz., that later Kabbalistic teachings found in Philo abundant justification.

How great, however, will be the surprise, if it will be discovered that they might have gone to a better and to a less distant source. In fact, some of the Kabbalists did. But it was Grätz who called attention to it, that Gnostic elements are found in the Talmud, and that the Mishnaic period was not as free from admixture of theosophy as would be supposed. He finds that the Rabbis living at

the time of the Bar Cochba war, in the reign of Hadrian, expressed themselves distinctly with respect to Gnosticism.[1]

Before, however, we proceed to treat of this aberration in speculation, let us look upon Talmudic metaphysics in general. The profoundest problems are those of Máăssé Merkabah and Máăssé Bereshith. We might term the one metaphysics, the other Talmudic cosmogony. The subject of the latter, however, is not only the probable character and order of creation, but also abstruse reasoning concerning the primitive substance itself and concerning the relation of the divinity to it in the act of creation. These two studies were carefully guarded, and looked upon as esoteric, to which but few could be admitted. They were to be communicated to few only, and the motto was the answer of God to Moses: "No man shall see me and live!"[2] Not that they were es-

[1] "Gnosticismus und Judenthum," p. 8.—In his "Geschichte der Juden," vol. IV., p. 94 ff, he has toned down his emphasis of the proposition. See Dr. I. M. Wise, "Origin of Christianity," Cincinnati, 1868, p. 354, who says: "All the Talmudical passages, which Dr. Grätz quotes as pointing to the dualism of the Gnostics point with much more certainty to the Paul Christians, and to their dualism of Father and Son."

[2] "The laws of chastity must not be studied by a company of three alone, nor the cosmogony by two (as in "Ezekiel," I.), nor theophany or metaphysics by one, except he be wise and discreet."—"Chagiga," 13, a.

sentially different from theology. The two overlapped each other in purpose. Maimonides even identified them. The two were gradations.[1] The Máăssé Bereshith was a source of peril in the hands of the uninitiated on account of a possible heresy with regard to the creation of the world by God; but did not involve, comparatively speaking, as profound a quality of metaphysics as the Máăssé Merkabah. It was in the Máăssé Merkabah, where the beaten track of theology was abandoned. In the study of it many a Rabbinic theosophist was deluded and finally constrained to wander aimlessly, having lost the certainty and the comfort of his faith.[2]

[1] "Chagiga," I., "Máăssé Merkabah is a kind of theology" (usually theosophy).

[2] In Preface to "More Nebuchim" Maimonides exhorts Joseph Ibn Aknin to peruse his work alone. "There are limits to the human intellect; he who undertakes to pass over these is 'one who cuts off the shoots.' . . . The phrase, 'Elisha cut off the shoots,' can be explained in several ways. One explanation is this: He 'entered Paradise,' means, he proposed to speculate on divine matters, but not in the proper manner. His method was neither scientific nor clear, and therefore resulted in confusion. But, in Rabbinical terminology, theology is called Pardes, hence the paraphrase, 'he cut off the shoots of Pardes.' It implies that he set at nought the limits of thought, and did not attend to the preparation proper to such abstruse study. He was ignorant of the propædeutics of theology. His inferences were not tempered by logical consistency. Hence the lamentable issue." Immanuel, "Commentary to Proverbs," in Dukes, "Blumenlese," Leipzig, 1844, p. 269; *cf.* "Kusari," III., 65. See also further, p. 164.

The belief in the future world was not entirely mystic. It was a hope, and yearning of the downtrodden people for a better condition. Roman domination and Greek sensualism had squandered the wealth of the country and had reduced the Jews to a state of discomfort and cheerlessness. The dogma of a future life was rather a fancy than a metaphysical assertion. All that religious speculation could do for this popular sentiment was to bring it within the scope of moral purity. It was eschatological, and with it were associated the doctrines of the resurrection of the dead and the immortality of the soul; but these, not having the affection of the people, were vague and less distinct. All these conceptions can be traced to the genius of the Jewish people; though, of course, it is not to be inferred from this that these doctrines are to be attributed solely to Judaism.

But metaphysicians soon had opportunity to appropriate these doctrines, arising out of the heart of the people. For, when they are divested of their sentimentality, these doctrines involve philosophic difficulties, upon which at any rate the intellect delights to exercise itself. Aside from this charm, which attaches to reflection, there was inducement offered soon to seek answer to the perplexing questions of a future life. The Oriental mind may be more liable than the Occidental to rest content in the theological

stage of thought, but there are occasions even for it to become aware of inconsistencies in theology. Greek philosophy is the mother of the science of religion. Science of religion is the methodic investigation of the character and is the synthesis of the doctrines of religion. About the beginning of the present era, Greek philosophy, through the Eleatic school, became the property of the world in its two-fold form of Stoicism and Epicureanism. Though these did not dwell upon the moral features of the eschatological doctrines, they found the questions of the beginning and the end of the world sufficiently important for investigation. One theme, however, occupied them preëminently, viz., the question concerning the aboriginal substance of the world, just as we find that same problem in the Talmudic Máássé Bereshith.[1]

[1] *Vid.* "Kusari," III. 53; IV. 25; *cf.* Maim., "Jessode Hathora," III. 11. The intimacy which subsisted between Rabbi Jehuda Hanassie and Marcus Aurelius leads E. H. Plumptre to say that "the teaching of the Pharisees was, on the great question of ethics, all but identical with that of the Stoics." And Dr. Bodek claims that he can trace a Jewish influence in the laws ascribed to Aurelius, and a Roman influence in some portions of the Mishna. Consult E. H. Plumptre, "Marcus Aurelius and the Talmud," in *Contemporary Review*, 1869, Vol. X., pp. 81–95, and Dr. Arnold Bodek, "Römische Kaiser in Jüd. Quellen," Leipzig, 1868. P. B. Watson, in his life of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus urges that this alleged intimacy and friendship between Marcus Aurelius and Rabbi is a fiction of a late date. See Watson's "Marcus Aurelius Antoninus," New York, 1884, p. 297, Note 2.

True, Jewish speculations were checked by the Rabbinical method of deducing theorems and philosophic principles from the text of the Bible. In fact so important was this method that it was a prime condition that a verse must be quoted in corroboration of an opinion. An opinion received validity only in so far as it could offer such biblical authorization and warrant.[1] From this method of exegesis it could easily occur that rational independence of speculation was made subservient to the authority of the Bible. It is easy to see that forced exegesis would be enlisted in aid of metaphysics, and a dangerous precedent given for the interpretation of the Bible.[2]

[1] On the methods of Rabbinic exegesis consult Prof. Dr. Mielziner's articles on "Talmudic Hermeneutics: Syllogism and Analogy," in *Hebrew Review*, 1880–81, pp. 42–53, and 1881–82, pp. 79–94.

[2] An interesting example of exegetical extravagance is the following: "Taanith," 25, b, Rabba says: *Rediyao* appeared to me, like a calf. His station is between the upper and the lower Tehomoth. This is identical with the Persian *Areduyâo-çura*, the genius of rain, which was probably transcribed Ardoyôh tûroh. In the course of time this was mistaken for Syriac (tauroh), Chald. (tûr), Arab. (tûrûn), = ox. Thus it turned out to be of the appearance of a calf! But according to Agadic practice, this had to be verified by a text, and this was found in "Shir Hashirim," II. 12, and *Rediyao* was easily made biblical. *Cf.* A. Kohut, "Ueber die jüd. Angelologie und Dämonologie in ihrer Abhängigkeit vom Parsismus." Leipzig, 1866 (Abhandlungen, D. M. G.), Bd. IV., No. 3, p. 47. See, however, "Beth Talmud," von Weiss und Friedmann, Wien, 1887, p. 245.

This gave pretext to Gnostic methods. The suggestion from foreign sources being at hand, the objection that there is a disparity between them and revelation could early be silenced. Exegesis was a fruitful field, and there was no one without at least so much skill as that he could not allegorize, and convey into the word of the Bible a meaning which had to be admitted as a likely and acceptable inference.[1]

Let us now take an example—a passage of the Talmud, which has, perhaps, more than any other, been subject of Haggadic interpretation, and from which much has been deduced. Maimonides and Albo and Bachja ibn Pakudah devote some attention to it.[2] "Chagigah," 14, b, reports: "Four Rabbis entered Pardes, viz., Ben Asai, Ben Soma, Acher, and R. Akiba. Ben Asai beheld and died; Ben Soma lost his reason; Acher cut down the shoots; and Rabbi Akiba came out in peace." The passage is evidently a report, which, though indefinite, is founded on a fact of history. It is likewise evident that reference is made here to the fact that these four Rabbis turned to

[1] Note what the Talmud says, "Megilla," IV., 9: "He who employs the symbolical method in commenting upon the prohibited degrees of intermarriage, must be silenced." *Kana* means to allegorize or symbolize.

[2] "More Nebuchim," I., 32; II., 30. Also "Ikkarim, IV., 33; Choboth Haleboboth," VIII., 4.

heterodox and abstruse studies with varying results. The historical basis of the narrative and the allusion to extra-biblical studies are warranted. On the one hand we have other sources that substantiate a certain independence of these Rabbis from the conventional mode of thought; and on the other we need to remember merely that the infusion of foreign literature was apt to be no less disastrous to the equanimity of traditional teachers than the dissemination of Greek customs was ultimately fatal to Jewish simplicity in conduct.

Indeed I might be tempted to say that a certain amount of significance can be attached to this passage, and if properly investigated it might furnish interesting data toward a history of dogmatics. It is a fact which will readily be admitted as somewhat warranted, that dogmatics and its present legitimate character are understood not simply by the history of its legitimate phases, but also by the series of heresies, which dogmatists denounced, *i. e.* by hints and allusions of a negative character, such as, *e. g.*, in this passage of "Chagigah."

These were not mere Haggadic speculations. It is true the Talmud denied all practical significance to the Haggada. The Haggada can never be brought to the aid of the Halacha.[1]

[1]An Haggadist cannot give permission or interdiction with respect to civil or ritual law. He is confined solely to homi-

But we wish to make clear that, while the fixed law was carefully guarded against outside influence, profound significance still was attached to metaphysics.

Properly speaking, metaphysics is foreign to biblical Judaism, and it is an evidence of foreign influence that there occurs any metaphysics in the Talmud. It is undeniably a proof of the presence of extraneous teachings, when we see them gaining ground and ingratiating themselves into the favor of Talmudic teachers. So that in dealing with Talmudic speculations as a part of the history of Jewish thought, we shall have to eliminate the foreign matter from the originally Jewish part of this mysticism.

Let us devote a little attention to the phraseology of the passage. Its language is symbolic. What is meant by "entering into Pardes" is not clear,[1] and it seems strange rhetoric to say that Ben Soma beheld and died, or Ben Asai beheld and lost his reason, and, finally, Acher cut off the shoots. It is an allegorical passage.

letics. Similar is the dispute between Rabba Areka and Samuel. Rab. says: "Whoever learns of the Magi, is guilty of death, *i. e.* is morally culpable." But Samuel, more favorably inclined to the Persians, answers: "Scriptures interdict the practical application merely, not the theoretic consideration of non-Jewish opinions."—*Cf.* "Sanhed.," 68; "Aboda Zara," 18, a; "Rosh Hashana," 24; "Sabbath," 75, a.

[1] We have seen Immanuel Romi's exegetical remarks on this phrase, p. 157, note 3, above.

We may assume the words are intentionally chosen. The word Pardes has had many explanations. It has been identified with Eden.[1] Philo says Eden is metonymic of wisdom. The Gnostics spiritualized the conception of Paradise; they had a terrestrial, a spiritual, and an ethereal Paradise, analogous to the three kinds of divine beings. Pardes implies a state of contemplative exaltation, an ecstatic condition such as theosophy delights especially in attaining.

Theosophy differs from legitimate philosophy in this very feature. In the former a condition

[1] By way of anticipation let us here give space to the following etymological reference: Paradise does not come from Sanscrit *paradesa*. *Paradesa* means foreign country, an enemy's country; nor did the Hebrew *pardes* ("Song of Sol." IV., 13) come from Persian, and thus indirectly from *paradesa*. There is, however, a word in Persian, viz. *pairi daêza*, which means *circumvallatio*, a piece of ground enclosed by high walls, or a garden, a park. Sancrit root *dih* or *dhih* (Sansc. h = Zend z) to knead; from this comes Sanscrit *dehi*, wall = τοῖχος (= wall), in Latin changed to *fig.*, gives *figulus* (potter) *figura* (form), and *fingere* (to shape). Gothic *deigan* to knead, Engl, dough, Germ. Deich.—Greek παράδεισος was brought back by Xenophon from Persia, *vid.* "Anabasis," I. 27, and in the Septuagint as name of Garden of Eden, borrowed a third time from Persian, or taken from Greek and indirectly from Xenophon."—Max Müller, "Chips From a German Workshop," vol. IV., p. 21–23. "Its modern Persian name is *firdausi*."—*Ibid.* As to relation of "Pardes," in the sense of metaphysics, to the Gnosis, consult Friedländer, "Ben Dosa und seine Zeit," Prag., 1872, p. 61 ff.

of spiritual clearness is a momentary state, in the latter a mental equilibrium is a habitual mode of the philosopher. So also according to Jewish conception. The four Rabbis did not meet with their lamentable fate because of this one venture. The incident has its explanation in the character of Judaism itself.

We find a quotation of R. Akiba in the compilation of Ethical Sayings. Rabbi Akiba is quoted as laying down this doctrine concerning Providence: "All is foreseen (fore-ordained), but free-will is left, and the world is judged in a good spirit, and the most important consideration is the deed" ("Aboth," III., 18). The meaning is plain. Rabbi Akiba reconciles fate with free-will, asserts that justice prevails, and lays down this principle in ethics: All depends on the spirit and quality of the deed.

It is tempting here to digress, and to speak more fully of this vexing problem, that a large part of our soul-life is pre-determined; of the limitations, which are inherent in the nature of our body, and of the conflict which obtains between the necessities of the latter and our moral freedom. But it must suffice to notice that Rabbi Akiba finds it proper to say that there is a harmony between physics and morals, that there is nothing contradictory between the dictatorialness of Providence and the moral freedom of man.

This, however, has been a favorite theme of the Talmudists.[1] There was no special reason for Rabbi Akiba to teach it again; the less so, when we remember that his time was the least opportune for such a teaching. The persecutions of Hadrian were in utter dissonance with any ideal of ethics. It was a sad time—most especially for the teachers. These felt most keenly the rigor of the imperial interdict of all Rabbinic learning. Though some continued teaching at the risk of their lives, they could affect no lasting good. The church disintegrated early into sects, through theological dissensions; misconceptions were created and these invaded even the peaceful precincts of the Jewish schools. Apologetics was a new science, and a busy art. The Rabbis had to dispute not only with the Christians, but also with those who had an uncompromising hatred of both Pentateuch and Gospels. Incapable of following out the line of religious thought with persistent rationalism, they were intolerent of all received notions unless they could be made to subserve theosophy. New doctrines made their way with startling rapidity, and the Rabbis, too, were not free from the danger of being drawn into the current.

[1] For instance, the parable of the lame and the blind. "Midr. Rabba," Leviticus, 4, and "Sanhedrin," 91, b.

Dualism was one of the new doctrines, which made their appearance, and became a stumbling block. The twofold nature of our being, the two kinds of existence—present and future—, the disparagement of this life to the glorification of the spiritual life which is to come were its transcendental grounds.

Dualism in the individual life has its prototype in the dualistic government of the world. It was a strange compromise, which allowed such a departure from the spirit of monotheistic Judaism. The arbitrary distribution of good and evil in the world is always a serious objection to the doctrine that there is a moral order in the world. It is a notorious fact, that in the Alexandrian school Neoplatonism was wedded to Judaism, however badly they were matched. Logos and Demiurgos were forced into Mosaism, despite the impossibility of ever reconciling them with the unity of God. Philonian philosophy was accepted as Jewish, though it was based on dualism, and later on it was developed in Alexandria into a system of philosophy.

Only because of precedents of former foreign importations into Judaism, Neoplatonism could gain a foothold in Judaism. Were it not that foreign elements had already crept into Jewish theology this doctrine of the Logos and the Demiurgos and of Emana-

tions would have been unvarnished heresy. The allegorization which Philo indulged in with impunity, became the source of a distinct movement in religious thought. Its radical phase is that which has cut the Gordian knot of theology, by proclaiming the divorcement of Judaism from the Bible and regarding the Bible as a simple record, in which historical tradition mingles with mythical elements.

The main feature of Philonian philosophy are the oft-mentioned Logos and the Demiurgos. We shall sketch both in a few words and try to show that the apologetics of R. Akiba in "Aboth," III., 18, refer to them. The God of Philo is so ethereal and so far removed from relationship with perishable matter, that it would be a depreciation of his sovereign dignity to come into contact with it. Not only at the act of creation, but also in the government of the world. A series of emanated beings, *dei ex machinâ*, helpedout of this difficulty. Of these, Logos and Demiurgos are those which interest us now. The Hyle (ὕλη), the lowest of the three classes of beings, was delegated to be formed by the Demiurgos. The essential character of finite beings had its efficient cause in this demiurgic emanation of the infinitely pure God. Logos is to Philo what the Eternal Ideas are to Plato; both have a real spiritual existence, and from both proceeds an eternal efflux

of entities. These realize and embody themselves in the physical world.

So far the road is smooth. But when once the separation between God and his emanation in the Demiurgos becomes so wide that practically the government of the world slips out of the hands of God, and is turned over entirely to the Demiurgos, then, as a matter of logic, the ethical support is withdrawn. The activity of the world becomes a ceaseless display of a course of rightness, in which the grace of God has no place, and no chance for manifestation. Added to this, the Free Will, the most sacred element of the religious life, is made impossible. For though there be admittedly a higher content in human life, the pneumatic or soul-life is through its external constraint so hampered, nay, even predetermined, that ethical considerations are pressed down to brutal necessity.

These difficulties, serious enough to the speculator, involved troublesome ones in the sphere of practical religion. The impressive question arose, of what source is the Evil, and this question could not be disposed of easily. To impugn the Demiurgos with the evil amounted to merely inverting the process of ascription. Philo could not avoid stopping there; but he saw the uselessness of it. In this question of the Origin of Evil, the Demiurgos, being a de-

preciation which God himself brought about in the interest of Creation, was very serviceable. Philo landed in an implied dualism, which was saved from being more heterodox by the device of Emanation. The dualism of the Alexandrian school was divested, to be sure, of grossness, but was in the main similar to the dualism which the Jews in an earlier period had brought with them from Babylon.

"All is foreseen and free-will obtains." This is a plain statement against fatalism. As we proceed we shall find that the last part also of R. Akiba's maxim, viz., that the criterion of morality lies in the quality of the *deed*, is proper.

For our purpose it is not necessary to characterize the Alexandrian school more particularly. We wish merely to keep in view the fact that attention might be paid with profit to innovations, and to the infusion of foreign elements, which were going on unnoticed in the schools of the philosophers,[1] as well as in the schools of Sura and Pumbadita.

The social and political condition of the Jews of Babylon was good. They lived peaceably and amicably amongst the Babylonians. They had a representative in the national gov-

[1] Philo himself in adducing examples of asceticism mentions the Persian Magi and the Indian Gymnosophists (Quod omnis probus liber, § 11, 12, ed. Mangey, II. 456, 457). *Ἐν Πέρσαις μὲν τὸ Μάγων. . . . Ἐν Ἰνδοῖς δὲ τὸ Παλαιστίνη* [*καὶ*] *Συρία καλοκαγαθίας οὐκ ἀγοῳος κ.τ.λ.*

ernment,—the Prince of the Exile. It is a very significant item for us, who are considering the innovation of religious matters, that there was intimate personal contact between Jews and Babylonians, for intimacy induces imitation.[1] It is true, when Magian practices became dominant the toleration ceased and the Jews were given less freedom in religious matters. Rabba Bar Bar Chana, when the fire-priests broke suddenly into his room and snatched away his lamp, while he was lying on his sick-bed, exclaimed: "Most merciful God, if thou dost not take me under Thy protection, grant me at least the protection of the Romans!"[2] They had to endure much oppressive treatment; but it was harassing more than interdictive, and had its cause more in the zeal of the Magi to prevent the desecration of the holy element, rather than interfere with the devotees of other faiths in matters of conscience, and in no sense to force their conversion to the fire-religion.[3]

[1] Haug maintains even that Ahura Mazda is thought of as monotheistic. Zoroaster taught a monotheistic religion and a dualistic philosophy.—"Essays on the Sacred Languages and Writings of Parsees," p. 300.

[2] "Gittin," 17, a.

[3] Thus the Maubads would rush into Jewish houses and smother the fire on the hearth, take with them the glimmering coals to restore the desecrated fire on the common fire-place. *Cf.* "Vendidad," Fargard, VIII., 251 ff., transl. by James Darmsteter, "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. IV., p. 112.

The popular mode of life during the Babylonian period exerted a large influence upon the Jews. This appears clearly in many passages of the Midrash and in the Haggadic portions of the Talmud, in which mention is made of mantics and miraculous cures, superstitions, astrology, etc. Of course the native disposition toward monotheism asserts itself on many occasions.[1]

There are many reminiscences of the Magian influence on Judaism. The ceremonial of the fire-worship was elaborate. Their altar was carried about, and having placed fire upon it, it was borne about on poles for public adoration. Notice our ark and its staves in the rings, carried by the priests. Two or three Magi watched this fire day and night, so that it might not be ex-

[1] *E. g.* "Joma," 96, b. "The Jews cried to God." Rab says: "They cried: 'Woe, woe, is it not Satan (the evil desire) who destroyed the temple, burned the sanctuary, killed the pious ones, and drove the Israelites out of their land, and who still raves in our midst! Thou, O Lord, didst give him to us, so that we should have the reward. We desire not the reward.' Then a scroll fell from heaven, upon which was inscribed: 'The seal of God is Truth.' Then they fasted. Satan was put into their power. But the prophet said to them: 'If you kill him, the world will be destroyed.' They held him captive for three days; and there was not a fresh egg to be had in all Palestine. And so they were in a dilemma: If they kill him, the permanence of the world is endangered. To implore the half of evil only (*i. e.* of chastity only) was not practicable. For heaven deals not in halves. They blinded him and let him go."

tinguished. Notice our Anshe Maămad, and later on the Ner Tamid. It was considered a great calamity when that fire was accidentally extinguished; and it was purposely extinguished at the death of the king to exemplify symbolically the lamentable occurrence. The festivals were: The New Year's day in the spring-equinox. The year had 360 days with five supplementary days. Some believed that the New Year's day was instituted as a memorial of creation. Recollect the discussion concerning Nissan and Tishri ("Rosh Hashana" 8, a; 10, b; 27, a). Their laws of family-life were instituted with a view to keeping the tribe pure. There are the two kinds of uncleanliness among the Persians, analogous to the first and second Rabbinical degrees of uncleanliness. There obtains even a practice like that of the water of the Sotah. Ritually many analogous features occur, down to the offering of a prayer of praise during the year of mourning, similar to the Kaddish.

The Sh'ma and the benediction before it were recited in the temple early in the morning at the break of day. The first benediction at the morning prayer was "Yozer Or." At the break of day it was the duty of the Persians to recite the "Hos Banim," beginning: Praise to thee, morning dawn. The beautiful morning dawn we praise!—"Yaçna," X.: at the begin-

ning of the morning dawn we praise thee. So also benedictions for food, and at beholding exceptional phenomena, are to be found among the Persians.

A strange phenomenon on Jewish soil is the peculiar observances with respect to the sun. Epiphanius informs us that the Ossians united with the Sampsitæ, *i. e.* adorers of the sun. Evidently a remark that means that there was a joint worship of the sun. So also both Jews and Persians turned toward the sun at prayer, and even in most private conduct were on their guard lest they should commit any impropriety toward the orb of light.[1]

Grätz and Herzfeld already admitted that the influence of Parsismus upon Judaism was considerable.[2] The Talmud makes a bold front of it, saying: "The names of the angels (also of the months) were brought from Babylon."[3]

[1] Notice reminiscences of sun-worship in "Sukka," V., 4; "Jalkut Shimeoni," 106; "Baba Bathra," 16, b; "Bereshith Rabba," 68; *Ibid.*, 22; "Beth Hammidrasch," ed. Jellinek, Wien, 1873, V., p. 40. *Cf.* Goldziher, "Mythology among the Hebrews," in many places. Compare "Berachoth," 26, a, and "Tosifta Joma," II., b. Notice especially: Rabbi Shimeon ben Lakish says: "The Fathers are the 'Merkabah.'" It is a succinct statement of the solar theory.

[2] "Geschichte der Juden," Vol. II., b, p. 415. "Geschichte des Volkes Israel," Braunschweig, 1847, p. 187.

[3] "Talm. Jerus. Rosh Hashono," ed. Krotoschin, p. 56, b; "Midrash Rabba," Gen. 48, 9.—*Vid.* Kohut's work, Z. D. M. G., 1866, vol. IV., No. 3.

This refers not only to the names, but to the meaning, and, to a large extent, to the essential content of demonology. So are also the eschatological doctrines, especially the doctrine of resurrection, borrowed from Irânism.[1] The analogy of the Zend Avesta and the Bible and Talmud is so great that Schorr thought to deduce almost the entire biblical and Talmudical teachings concerning the Messiah, future life, etc., from the Zend Avesta.[2]

This analogy was also noticed by Rabbi Akiba, and hence his apologetics. He felt himself called upon to re-assert that Providence is supreme, that there is no struggle between good and evil, that the world is governed in a benevolent spirit. There is a substantial content in human life; man is not the helpless victim of fate. "Rabbi Akiba went out in peace."[3] Rabbi Akiba inveighs

[1] Windischmann, "Zoroastrische Studien," p. 231 ff., and Spiegel, "Iranische Alterthüner, p. 158 ff.

[2] "He-Chaluz," Jahrgang VIII. Frankfurt, a. m, 1869.

[3] In "Aboth," III., 17, Akiba says: "Wisdom limits itself. It knows how and when to keep silent" (literally, the fence of wisdom is silence). This Jellinek declares to have a twofold meaning: The one is the practical and ethical, the other is Ophistic. In the realm of the spirit the first manifestation, through creation, is silence; the second, wisdom; but the second was encompassed by the first in mystic signs, such as, for example, the serpent. The sentence has thus a felicitous turn. See "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala," Erstes Heft, Leipzig, 1852, p. 46; also Friedländer, "Ben Dosa," p. 73.

against the mysticism of his time. "When you come to the pure spot of marble, say not: 'Water, water!' for the lying tongue hath no enduring!" Cosmological theories were a favorite play of the Gnostics. Akiba protests against the mystic account of creation, and against the deification of the hylic principle.

The happy mean, to which practical rationalism always reverts, is also here the refuge of Rabbi Akiba. It is a credit to his wisdom that under the burden of the Halacha, and under the precarious trend toward schisms within Judaism in his time, he should recommend the only course worth recommending: "The law is like two paths, one of warmth, the other like ice. Which shall a man choose? If he prefer the first, it is excessive; if the latter, it is also excessive. Calamity threatens from both sides. Let him choose the mean, and walk thereon."

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